Bing

JUNE
1984

Edited by REG BRISTO

No. 72

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We've perpetrated our habitual tendency to misnumber pages; not to worry, there are 50 and despite the nos. they do read in the correct sequence.

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Secretary/Editor:
NEG BRISTO,
7 Greenmeadow Close,
CWMBRAN, Gwent, NP44 4PJ
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YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS DUE on receipt of this issue, or shortly thereafter, if a "X" appears in the box. Two XX's indicate you are well behind and no more issues will be sent unless we hear from you. Prompt payment is tremendously helpful in planning and to the continuance of ICC/BING.

TAPE/DISC CONSULTANTS: Bert Bishop, "Tideway", Imperial Avenue, Maylandsea, Chelmsford, Essex.
Lionel Pairpoint, 86 Ellesmere Avenue, Mill Hill, London, NW7.

FILM CONSULTANTS: Fred Reynolds, 69 Heathmere Avenue, Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8RQ
Keith Parkinson, "Meadowcroft", Houghtons Lane, Eccleston, St. Helens, WA10 5LD

CHIEF PUBLICIST: Leslie Gaylor, 114 Medina Avenue, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 1HG

For those who give only a cursory glance to the above we must ask them to take a further look! For the following reason:

IT HAS, AT LAST, BEEN FOUND NECESSARY TO INCREASE THE ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION by 50p TO £3.00 for the year, or the four issues of BING post paid. This does NOT mean everyone immediately sends 50p. It DOES mean that when you renew from now on, it will be £3.00 and not £2.50.

Although naturally we regret this, few members are going to be surprised for the majority have long expressed amazement that it could remain at £2.50 for so long. Bear in mind that postage - at present - of a single copy of BING costs 21p second-class. That means that 84p immediately comes out of the annual subscription before a word is written or materials purchased.

Why has it remained low?- too low it now seems! - well, we don't aim at a profit - and we had no desire to join in the inflationary game, we're mindful of our retired members, we've shopped around for materials, negotiated discounts, been subsidised to a small extent from various publications, and so on. The last increases in paper, ink envelopes, &c., and with slimming down of discounts to us have proved to be the straw that broke the camel's back - so to speak.

Its difficult to believe this 50p increase will impose hardship on anyone - its still less than a small round of cheap drinks, less than 2ozs of tobacco, less than a short train ride - and certainly less than 2 gallons of petrol - FOR A WHOLE YEAR OF BING!

Mind you, if any recent subs payers sent their 50p w4 wouldn't be so ungrateful as to send it back! But basically, its £3.00 from now on. One of the results of our "maintain the low subs policy" is that we're not very secure should any equipment need replacing! This small increase, however, should put us on a firmer footing.

EDITORIAL

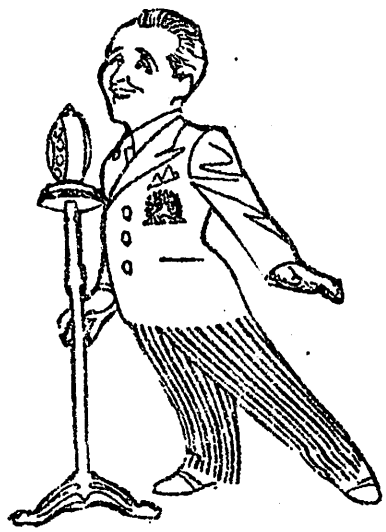
For those who remember Bing from the 30's, even the 40's, there's been plenty to put up with ! For those in that category have reached, according to medical evidence, an age when the capacity to absorb new learning, new facts...any mental effort gets progressively more difficult. Yet, what have we had? Well, there was decimal currency (a rip-off in any case!) By the way, we're sticking to factual things and not saying a word about a tuppeny bar of chocolate that now costs the equivalent of 3/6d! Or a postage stamp that costs a similar amount - against 1½p old currency! No indeed, that field is too vast - I mean, a packet of cigarettes at £1.06 against - what was it? 6½d old money again. A gallon of petrol at £1.80-odd - not all that long ago (certainly not the 30's) it was 3/6d.... No we mean decimal currency; getting adjusted. Then there's metric - 50grams of tobacco (or wool) instead of an ounce or two....1500 metres replacing the mile (in athletics - they're not getting much luck with metric otherwise) Imagine changing all the speedos and road- signs to kilometres! Then they changed all the counties....we've still got to work out precisely where is Cleveland and Cumbria, and Daffydd and Clwyd. We in Gwent are not too badly off - its shorter than MONMOUTHSHIRE! Which reminds us, we're glad we've not too many members in CLACKMANNANSHIRE. Its an address in itself.... Yet we have members who steadfastly refuse to believe they are living in Humberside. They are in YORKSHIRE! But then, we know a shop (in Staines, Midd'x) where everything is priced in £:s:d....stout fella. And around here they've changed the BOROUGHS! Still working on that one.

Then there's postal CODES. We're urged to include it in our address. Again, many members resolutely refuse to have anything to do with suchflummery....yet it does make a difference. I think the POST OFFICE put them aside and deal with them in odd moments. But really, the Post office is beyond comprehension these days.... but that's another big story - of how 1st class mail regularly arrives after the second-class.....

Then there's popular music of today... help! Anyone got an aspirin!

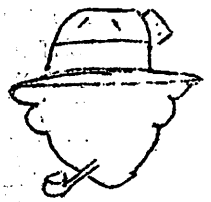
My goodness, did we ever need Bing more?

And we forebore from mentioning centrigrade against Fahrenheit - or Hondas, Suzukis, and Yamahas racing around the Isle of Man instead of Nortons, BSA's or Matchless....



LESLIE GAYLOR

Letters show that the recollections and anecdotes of his Crosby years by Leslie are particularly appreciated by members. Here is another generous helping.



The previous issue of BING brought its usual great interest for me and, as is customary with my own personal make-up, was read over several times to digest all the contents in order to obtain total satisfaction before being stored away, perhaps for another 'browse-through' at some time in the future.

I was delighted to see the reprint of the album sleeve of the Bing Crosby-Louis Armstrong record HAVIN' FUN - Legend Records' SOUNDS RARE SR 5009, using extracts from Bing radio shows of 1949-50. The caricature drawing of Bing and Satchmo by Peter Manders for the sleeve is really superb.

And I was very pleased when The Record Centre, 44 Loveday St., Birmingham, B4 6NP sent me a copy as soon as they received a supply from the States. It was soon on my turntable! It took only the first few seconds of hearing for me to realise that the album was the result of a very good engineering job.

The lengthy sleeve notes revealed that a Volume 2 was forthcoming, using airshots from 1951 Bing radio shows and rather than spend ing my time reminiscent of living in purgatory (!) I wrote to the producer, one Wayne Knight, requesting him, in the kindest way, to send me a listing of the contents for this Volume 2.

Some little time elapsed but there came a Saturday morning when I was leaving home around 7am - and there was a record package left on the doorstep. The thoughtful postman had not knooked no doubt believing I was still in slumberland. Opening the package I was amazed and delighted to find it was the second album, called this time, MORE FUN - SOUNDS RARE SR5010. The sleeve is again labelled Louis Armstrong -Bing Crosby and has another splendid drawing by artist Peter Manders. An accompanying letter from Mr. Knight was equally delightful. He conveyed the record was for me to enjoy as a gift, thanked me for writing to me and signed himself off as 'Musically yours'. What's more, he gave me something to think about for he wrote he had plans to issue more Bing radio material and would be airmailing me details at the appropriate time. Noting the excellent quality of both HAVIN' FUN and MORE FUN its safe to suggest that his forthcoming Bing release(s) will make for good listening.

In further correspondence with him I have suggested items from the Chesterfield and General Electric shows as there are so many really splendid Bing renditions of songs from these broadcasts. I also let Mr. Knight know about the many Bing-Buddy Cole CBS radio tapes that Ken Barnes returned to Beakens Warehouse in Hollywood where they remain stored. I count myself among the many collectors who would dearly like to own a few albums in good sound quality of this radio material still, sadly, lying idle after so many years.

But I guess its a question of finance all round and a smaller company like Legend Records might necessarily fight shy of negotiating any deals for these Bing/Cole tapes. Nevertheless, I do have a letter from Basil Grillo sent when he was President of Bing Crosby Enterprises in which he said the Crosby organisation had control over all the radio material except the Kraft and I somehow fancy that any Bing albums forthcoming from Legend Records would be from the Chesterfield and/or General Electric shows.

MR. KNIGHT TELLS ME THAT HE WOULD LIKE WORD TO BE GOT AROUND ABOUT HIS ALBUMS AND

SHOULD ANY BING ALBUMS BE FORTHCOMING HE WOULD LIKE THE SUPPORT OF COLLECTORS, OBVIOUSLY, TO MAKE IT WORTHWHILE.

The recordings used on the second, MORE FUN, album are taken from five 1951 radio shows so that gives us a couple of GONE FISHIN' recordings. Obviously both these albums are designed to capture a market among the Bing Crosby and Louis Armstrong clans, thus the contents of the albums are shared between both artists.

BING - THE MAN:

Many people, especially since various controversial books have been on the market relating to him, have asked me what sort of man did I find Bing. Firstly, I must say that I am well aware of the axiom 'to know someone you have to live with them' so that puts me apart from members of the Crosby family who have put pen to paper. However, during the many times that I met Bing I found him to be all I could want him to be. Numerous members as well as other people have conveyed to me how really taken aback they were at the manner in which Bing was so readily approachable, and to us ordinary 'guys and gals' unconnected with and miles away from the show business world he was always charm itself. Many, many ICC members had the privilege and pleasure of meeting Mr.Crosby and their stories appeared in BING over the years - they all told the same story. Though it should be added people meeting Bing always seemed aware that Bing gave his time (and his charm!) readily, there were lines beyond which one didn't stray. Understandably.

To give some insight of Bing's nature I recall when a postcard from Bing said that I could go to see him at Shepperton studios during the making of the film, THE ROAD TO HONG KONG. I was to phone his secretary - Jilda Smith - at the studios to check what days he would be there. This I did and I was invited to the studios on the first day's filming on August 2nd 1961.

Having got to the New Malden Railway station in Surrey it was arranged that I would ring Jilda Smith from there and I was soon in contact with her. She instructed me to wait at a cinema not far from the station and said she would send a car to pick me up.

After a wait of perhaps twenty minutes a Rolls Royce, complete with chauffeur drew up to whom I paid not too much attention - I was admiring the magnificent car! As I was the only person on the pavement the driver opened the door, saying: "I take it you are Mr. Gaylor to see Mr. Bing Crosby?" On my assent he saw me into the rear seats and said "We'll soon have you at the studios, Sir." I know I thought: so this is how the top knobs ride around!

Arrived at the studios, it wasn't long before I met Bing - and did I feel delighted! Almost immediately Bing said "Come with me Leslie and meet Bob Hope." That meeting, in Bob's dressing-room was amusing as well as exciting.

Then Bing uttered what to me was a magical invitation when he said: "Would you like to meet the famous songwriters, Jimmy Van Heusen and Sammy Cahn?" You can imagine my reply. So much real-life Crosbyana was happening I felt I may be dreaming. These great songwriters have written grand songs which had thrilled me for years and it was a great experience to meet these gentlemen, shake their hands, and secure their autographs.

A little later Bing suggested going outside for some fresh air and we were joined by Bob Hope. As we lolled against the studio wall - can you imagine the three of us? - I noticed opposite us no less than four Rolls Royce cars neatly lined up and I remarked to Bing that I had had a ride in one of those from the station that morning.

"Well, why not Leslie?", answered Bing. "You may just as well ride in them as anyone else. We've hired four of them for the duration of the film-making."

Soon afterwards Bing and Bob were on

the set, going through the song and dance act complete with their canes and straw hats while the spotlight fell on a curtain behind them naming previous ROAD films - which you will remember.

And they really worked at it to perfect the dance and one 'take' which appeared to have the director's approval was messed up right at the conclusion.

On finishing the song-and-dance routine Bing and Bob had to prod their pointed canes into the floor beside them - but Bing's finished up caught in his right coat pocket. And when the director said "We'll have to do that again" Bob chipped in with "Can someone give this guy a shorter cane?"

This singing and dancing was performed to a 78rpm disc of the song TEAMWORK played on a nearby amplifier and it was most noticeable how the singing and dancing was perfectly timed to this recording.

With agreement reach eventually that the scene was satisfactory, everyone made for another part of the large studios where there were laid out long lines of tables crammed with food and drink, the like of which I have never seen before or since.

And suddenly, a small door in the corner of the studio was opened and people started coming in one at a time and as more than 200 press reporters and cameramen from all over the world were entering to join in on the 'feast' I found myself wondering when the last person would get in!

It really was an experience to be at Shepperton Studios on what was press day, August 2nd 1961

On my next visit there I was again picked up by the chauffer-driven Rolls Royce, outside the same cinema...

So that was just part of my experience in meeting Bing and I hope it is of interest to members.

Changing the subject, there was the time when, knowing that Bing was well aware of the numerous albums that were being issued in the USA and elsewhere made up of material from 'non-commercial' sources without official agreement one might say, I took an album to London one day and decided to risk that he might query its origin as I was desirous of his autographing it. Bing had earlier remarked to me that 'these people are taking anything off the radio - and no one gets paid for it!' This was said jokingly but it was plain Bing's concern was that only the best quality material would be put out where he was concerned, irrespective of whether or not he had been asked for agreement.

As a point of interest, perhaps, the album in question, which was autographed by Bing 'To Leslie with thanks, from Bing Crosby' was the Pelican album SOFT LIGHTS & SWEET MUSIC; Bing didn't even query its content, which made me breathe a little easier.

This album is a favourite of mine if only for the excellent alternate take of I'M HUMMIN', I'M WHISTLIN', I'M SINGIN'.

MICHAEL HOLLIDAY:

Members have also written to me in glowing terms of the album THE VERY BEST OF MICHAEL HOLLIDAY they have obtained - released as reported in TRACK EVENTS in the previous issue of BING on 'Music for Pleasure', MFP41 5646-1. The sleeve notes give details of the concert held in London in 1964 at the Prince of Wales theatre as a tribute to Michael and for the benefit of his family.

Many people from the world of show business were there to give praise to Michael's talent, but most attention, it is noted, was given to the voice of one person who wasn't in attendance - namely, Bing.

Shortly after Michael's passing a journalist on the staff of the music weekly paper - THE NEW MUSICAL

EXPRESS - sent me a letter as he had, in fact, done so many times before. This was Derek Johnson and on this occasion he told me of the proposed concert at the Prince of Wales Theatre with a request that I might write to Bing on behalf of himself and the organisers for a taped message from him to be played in the concert. Michael had of course met Bing several times.

Bing kindly obliged so I'm sure members won't mind me saying that I felt quite proud of this and I add it to the list of so many things I was involved in Bing-wise.

I mention the following since one day I found myself suddenly with an added standing in life! In the mid-70's a fellow workmate came to see me with some glee to say that the night before he was roaming the airwaves and twiddling the knobs of his radio when he heard Bing on an interview being broadcast by the American Forces Network in Munich, Germany.

Bing, it seems, was speaking of the numerous activities that were going for him in Britain on radio, TV., and the recording scene as well as his appearances at the London Palladium and so on. He said he was having a busy time - and attributed much of it to myself!

I was very pleased of course that Bing had mentioned me over the AFN network but much regretted I had not heard it myself.

Eventually, however, a few letters arrived from Crosby enthusiasts with the envelopes addressed in fairly vague terms such as TO LESLIE GAYLOR, BING CROSBY FAN, ISLE OF WIGHT. Happily, they feached me. A record transaction that came about as a result of the AFN broadcast resulted in a Belgian collector sending me a package of two albums addressed as TO: SIR LESLIE GAYLOR! I have retained the outer cover for the smile it gives me.

AND AT THE PALLIUM:

Now and again I think of the afternoon of the day of Bing's first ever Palladium concert when I met music man Pete Moore near the stage-door and requested him to tell Bing I was outside and could I come in to watch the rehearsing? It worked wonders for me and I found myself sitting with Kathryn Crosby and some of Rosemary' Clooney's children.

During a break in the rehearsals I went and had a chat with Bing, telling him that I had acquired a number of tickets for various concerts over the two weeks.

> A TYPICAL WRY BING STATEMENT WAS WHAT I GOT IN RETURN WHEN HE SAID: "YEAH, BUT AFTER TONIGHT'S CONCERT YOU WON'T WANT THE OTHERS!"

A WELCOME RELEASE, BUT...

I was pleased to note in the last issue of BING that I regarded as a most favourable review of the MCA album WHITE CHRISTMAS. This record was, as stated, virtually unobtainable for many years and I was not surprised to read that very generous offers had been made for copies, pressed from the time it was first released and indeed many years ago when record pressing techniques were in their early days for long-play manufacture.

More recently, record 'buffs' have paid high prices for the Japanese issue in order to satisfy their long sought-after wants.

My record dealer was informed that the British release around last Christmas was due on December 11th which didn't give much time to catch the Christmas trade. Luckily it was out just a few days earlier.

And sales must have been good, too, because when ordering his supply of records (always on a Monday) my dealer was informed by the distributors that they were 'out of stock'. Indeed, he got the same answer when he phoned them on a Sunday just a week before Christmas. His Sunday ordering was a last-minuteattempt before the festive season was upon us. When I posted out my Christmas cards I was able to let it be known to the recipients that the record was on the market.

I now share the pleasure of those who have expressed their delight that at long last they are possessors of the album. It is a first-rate pressing

and for me the SNOW track alone is orth the price of the whole album, and all thanks are due to British MCA. I noted, however, that in his wisdom one Crosby collector reviewed this WHITE CHRISTMAS release as "not a lot to get excited about". Just as well MCA are unlikely to read this obscure review for it would hardly be an incentive for them to release other material so many desire.

ARTISTIC CROSBYANA:

Now and again I find myself the recipient of some little item concerning Bing, and through the generosity of Trevor Wagstaff, certainly one of the most active Bing 'pluggers' around among the younger brigade, I am the proud owner of one of his artistic efforts.

Trevor has, it seems, been trying his hand at pyrograph (poker work) and has created what is truly a marvellous likeness of "Bing at the Palladium".

This etching - if that is the true description - has been done on a slim mahogany base size about 6½" x 4" and is really attractive. I understand Trevor has done a number for sale at the BCHS meeting and tribute due to be held in May last and they were in fact taken over by member Renee Chester.

It makes a fine little novelty for any Bing fan and an SAE to Trevor at 49 Dawes Avenue, Hornchurch, Essex RM12 6AJ may bring results and I'm sure Trevor won't mind me mentioning this. (Editor: I hope not! I disclaim any responsibility).

THOSE PLATINUM DISCS:

During the time of the auction of Bing's possessions at Butterfields which you read about in San Francisco in May '82, I've wondered who were the lucky purchasers of the two platinum discs that Bing was awarded - the first on 7th June 1960, and the second on September 15th 1970.

I know how proud I felt when I received photographs of these outstanding awards, sent to me by Larry Crosby and autographed by Bing. They are a source of much pride to me since th first was signed in red by Bing TO MY GOOD FRIEND AND COHORT LESLIE - BING CROSBY. And the second TO LESLIE, THANKS - BING CROSBY.

These platinum disc awards were reasonably well known in the record business and the musical papers and books &c but not elsewhere; one day I hit on the idea that their existence should be more widely known and Bing's standing as a real "colossus" in the song and record would should be given an added boost.

I achieved this by contacting Mr. Norris McWhirter, co-Editor of the famous GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS and he accepted my suggestion that photographs of the discs be published in his book. I had negatives made and Mr. McWhirter honoured his word. The photographs were thus published around the world and in no less than one million copies of each of the two issues concerned. I need hardly tell members that Bing was very pleqsed at this outcome.

I've heard from Johnny Jones in Ireland and Bill Untington in Morecambe (my thanks to both) of a 3-LP set issued on Japanese MCA. The set is entitled FIFTY YEARS OF POP STANDARDS-has been issued to tie in with Deccas (MCA) 50 years in the record business, 1934-84. Items include MANDY IS TWO: GIVE ME THE SIMPLE LIFE: LOVE ME OR LEAVE ME: LIKE SOMEONE IN LOVE: GOLDEN EARRINGS: THEN YOU'VE NEVER BEEN BLUE etc. plus many more commonly issued titles.

Until nedt time, then!

Editor: Noting the remarks by the producer of HAVIN' FUN/MORE FUN albums about passing the word around - well, we do it, but we have a distinct reluctance in mentioning all records which prove difficult if not virtually impossible to acquire. And then only very expensively. Seems no one can cure the problem; retailers just will not take records far removed from the accursed TOP TEN. The same, of course, applies to the multi-issues now being made so surprisingly by MCA Japan. It is merely frustrating for members to

KMH

KMH indeed - as any self-respecting Crosby devotee knows, stands for the KRAFT MUSIC HALL. Kraft(cheese and other dairy products) being the company which sponsored this legendary radio series - and which prompted Bob Hope in one of his many irreverent moments, acknowledging Bing's voice was just right for selling cheese !

Of all Bing's radio series with various sponsors, the Kraft remains the most magical, the most intriguing and - paradoxically - the one we know least about! But, with his marathon recording contract with Decca records, his long association with Paramount films, K.M.H. was one of the firmest planks in Bing's remarkable career.

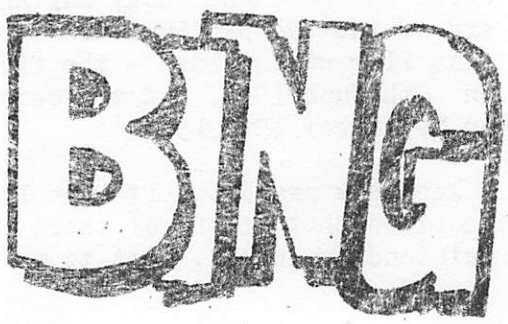
The reasons are not far to seek: Radio was at its most popular period in the 30's and 40's, with no distractions from television. Radio had got over its teething troubles of the 20's, and development from cats-whisker to super radiograms was speedy, making radio, sparklingly new, with pictures, the big entertainment of the 30's and 40's. And Bing was its brightest, most powerful, attraction - though rival attractions were formidable. Radio prompted people to buy RECORDS; it also further encouraged them to go to the pictures to see the stars of radio on the screen.

Secondly, Hollywood itself was in its hey-day with great stars whose fame, talent, charisma, remain to this day - and they seemed to queue up to be on the Crosby Kraft Music Hall radio show - guests which included highly dramatic actors, comedians, fellow-singers, groups (groups in the old sense, e.g. the Mills Brothers), opera and concert singers, harmonica players, bazooka players - and violin virtuosi!

Thirdly, it was the golden age of songs - brilliant songwriters were turning out a seemingly endless stream of fine songs - songs which also exist to this day as "standards".

It is superfluous no doubt to add, fourthly, there was Bing's unique talents and voice to grace every show; to demonstrate his talent for repartee, for 'living with the best' yet also treating the guests with the respect they deserved. His tremendous personality was perhaps the most positive reason for the success of the KMH. The show is of absorbing interest to Crosby devotees also because of its extremely long-run creating, therefore, a rich field for research.

Alas, despite all the foregoing, it is not an easy researching job. No one at the start realised it was radio history in the making; tape recorders were non-existent. As each show ended, it was forgotten for work



began instantly on the next - guests lined up, Bing's song's, scripts written. The latter, according to Bing, was a very haphazard function with sheets of lines being mimeographed as they were required!

The Kraft Music Hall was a prestigious show, it must be admitted, before Bing took over. You read in the previous issue of BING how two'protegees' of Paul Whiteman succeeded their boss, e.g. Bing and Jimmy Dorsey. The fact that up until then Paul Whiteman had presided reveals the stature of the show.

It is history how after a year or so, Jimmy Dorsey decided to leave the show (he had been musical director) to further his own band career no doubt correctly believing that being accompanist, even to Bing Crosby, was not going to put him in the top flight of bandleaders for remember the swing-band era was at its height just then. And so came John Scott Trotter, remembered by Bing on account of the excellent arrangements he had scored for PENNIES FROM HEAVEN.

Its history, too, that JST had the forethought to record the Kraft shows from when he took over and to repeat ourselves for the umpteenth time, these were subsequently discovered many years later, dustladen in his garage.

But it is certain that the shows were recorded from the outset if only on account of time differences across the States. And we've all heard KMH snatches which featured Bing singing with the Dorsey band. But it must have been the case that once the shows had been broadcast the recordings (on 16" metal discs) were just discarded. Hence it would seem no true, authentic, data about the shows exists. All of which sounds most distressing - and frustrating.

> Yet! The astonishing circumstance is that some members DO have extensive information on KMH! Seems they are working away, ploughing their individual furrows. Even so, we hope one day it will all be brought together so that it may be correlated and published as a whole, complete, KMH anthology !

That was intended to refer to diligent members in this country but now from Australia comes a massive contribution to KMH-lore. We've long been aware that Australia has some of the most formidable Crosby collectors to be found anywhere - their private LPs, rare tapes that have cropped up and mail which reveals unbelievable knowledge of Bing's career, are all evidence of this. And in passing, we might say again what a disappointment not to mention tragedy, that Bing never did make his visit to Australia.

Be that as it may, RON DANIELS of South Australia (1 Battye Aven., Victor Harbor, South Australia 5211) has sent us the complete listing of THE SONGS BING SANG ON THE KMH. These we intend to list in BING, starting forthwith! Regretfully, details of guests &c. are not available. Even so, this list should prove of absorbing interest. It will also cause a lot of chagrin and heartburning!

One sees that Bing did indeed sing some of the very big hits on radio that he never recorded commercially. ALONE, for instance, a beautiful song which came, incongruously, from the Marx Brothers film A NIGHT AT THE OPERA. One of my all-time favourites.... you will note songs never heard of before - or since! YOU HIT THE

SPOT, I FOUND A DREAM....but its better you should browse thro' the songs before we start commenting on them:

BING'S KRAFT MUSIC HALL : WITH JIMMY DORSEY ORCHESTRA

5th December 1935:

(Please
(Learn to croon.
(June in January (Medley
(From the top of your head
Red sails in the sunset
On treasure island

12th December 1935:

(Thanks
(Temptation
(Love in bloom (Medley
(I wish I were Aladdin
Here's to romance
After you've gone
Boots and Saddle.

19th December 1935:

(I kiss your hand, madame
(I'm yours
(I surrender, dear (Medley
(From Monday on
Alone
Dinah
You are my lucky star

26th December 1935:

Thanks a million
You are my lucky star
(Brevity here suggests a crowded Christmas party?)

2nd January 1936:

Eeny meeny miney mo
I'll see you in my dreams
Boots and saddle

9th January 1936:

A little bit independent
Some of these days
I found a dream
With all my heart

16th January 1936:

Someone stole Gabriel's horn
Please believe me
My blue heaven
One night in Monte Carlo
The music goes round and around

23rd January 1936:

You hit the spot
A beautiful lady in blue
Margie
Roll along, prairie moon

30th January 1936:

Stay on the right side of the road
I'm gonna sit right down and write myself a letter
I never knew
With all my heart

6th February 1936:

I'm shooting high
I'm sorry dear
Moon over Miami

13th February 1936:

I feel like a feather in the breeze
Please believe me
A beautiful lady in blue
If I should lose you

20th February 1936:

I'm gonna sit right down and write myself a letter
Dinner for one, please James
Dear old girl
I'm building up to an awful let-down.

27th February 1936:

Saddle your blues to a wild must-ang.
Lights out
(Moon over Miami
(I found a dream Medley
(Here's to romance
You're driving me crazy
West wind.

5th March 1936:

Goody, Goody.
(With all my heart
(Please believe me Medley
(If I should lose you
Deep night.
The touch of your lips

12th March 1936:

Sing an old-fashioned song
(I'm shooting high
(Lights out Medley
(A beautiful lady in blue
Way down yonder in New Orleans
Where are you?

19th March 1936:

Its been so long
(I wish I were Aladdin
(West wind
(The touch of your lips
In a little Spanish town
Goody, Goody
Everything's in rhythm with my
(heart

26th March 1936:

From the top of your head
Just one more chance
Let's face the music and dance
A melody from the sky
Say the word and its yours

2nd April 1936:

What's the name of that song?
(Its been so long
(Sing an old-fashioned song
(Everything's in rhythm with
(my heart Medley
(A pretty girl is like a
(melody
So this is Heaven
Twilight on the trail.

9th April 1936:

Robins and roses
Alexander's ragtime band
Lovely lady
Lost
MEDLEY: Titles not known.

16th April 1936:

I'm putting all my eggs in one
Blue (basket.
Would you?
(A melody from the sky
(Lovely lady Medley
(Let's face the music and dance)
Desire

23rd April 1936:

(Its no fun
(Robins and roses
(Would you? Medley:
(Lost
Swanee river
Who is Sylvia?
We'll rest at the end of the
(trail

30th April 1936:

Yearning
(Robins and roses
(Would you? Medley:
(Lost

7th May 1936

Let yoursel_ go
I'll stand by
June night

14th May 1936:

Goody, goodby
You
Sleepy time gal

(Cont....

7th May 1936 (Cont.)

(Desire Medley)
(Twilight on the trail)
(I'm putting all my eggs in one
(basket)
The touch of your lips.

14th May 1936:

You started me dreaming
All my life.

CORRECTIONS: Previous page, 14th May: first song should read GOODY, GOODY. 7th May, first song should read LET YOURSELF GO.

21st MAY 1936:

Wake up and sing
Alpha beta Phi Sweetheart
Do you ever think of me?
Moonrise on the lowland

28th May 1936:

You can't pull the wool over my eyes
(The touch of your lips
(I'm putting all my eggs in one)
Medley: (basket)
(We'll rest at the end of the)
(trail)
Robins and roses
You

4th June 1936:

The Glory of love
The last of my past
Ja-Da
There's a small hotel
All my life

11th June, 1936

No programme: Reason not known

18th June 1936

You can't pull the wool over my
(eyes
These foolish things
Alone
We'll rest at the end of the
(trail

25th June 1936:

No programme: reason not known

2nd July 1936:

The house Jack built for Jill
I Can't escape from you
Empty saddles

9th July 1936:

Wake up and sing
Waiting for the Robert E. Lee
There's a small hotel
Empty saddles.

16th July 1936:

The glory of love
Great day
These foolish things
Rendezvous in a dream

23rd July 1936:

No programme: reason not known

30th July 1936:

On the beach at Bali-Bali
Honest and truly
Take my heart
Would you?
Long ago and far away

6th August 1936:

It ain't right
Jealous
Robins and roses
Did I remember ?
Empty saddles.

13th August 1936:

I'm an old cowhand
Until the real thing comes along
No regrets
Sometimes I'm happy
Rendezvous in a dream

20th August 1936:

You can't pull the wool over my eyes
I can't escape from you
These foolish things
Just one word of consolation
South sea island magic

BING TOOK A VACATION AT THIS POINT, RETURNING IN OCTOBER

15th October 1936:

One, two, button your shoe
Let's call a heart a heart
On the beach at Waikiki
And so do I
Pennies from Heaven

22nd October 1936:

I'm an old cowhand
Did I remember?
Somebody loves me
Pennies from Heaven
South sea island magic

29th October 1936:

I'm in a dancing mood
The way you look tonight
Me and the moon
Button up your overcoat
And so do I

5th November 1936:

You turned the tables on me
I'll sing you a thousand love songs
Until the real thing comes along
S'posing
Let's call a heart a heart.

12th November 1936:

One, two, button your shoe
I can't escape from you
Until today
A fine romance
Mighty lak a rose

19th November 1936:

Typical tropical night
The way you look tonight
Pennies fromHeaven
Exactly like you
Empty saddles

26th November 1936:

Did you mean it?
Darling, not without you
Sweet lady
I'm in a dancing mood
And so do I

3rd December 1936:

You turned the tables on me
The night is young
Oh, you beautiful doll
Did I remember?
South sea island magic

10th December 1936:

One, two, button your shoe
In the chapel in the moonlight
I'll sing you a thousand love (songs
Can't we be friends?
Close to me

17th December 1936:

Its d'lovely
*She'll be coming round the mountain
Midnight blue
Charmaine
Darling, not without you
And so do I

* Duet with Jack Oakie who was, obviously, a guest on this programme. Bing rated Jack Oakie very highly indeed as a comic-actor, vide CALL ME LUCKY.

(Cont....

24th December 1936:

Adeste Fidelis
Trust in me
Diane
Did you mean it?
Pennies from Heaven
Silent night

31st December 1936:

With plenty of money and you
In the chapel in the moonlight
Stumblin'
When my dreamboat comes home
Close to me.

7th January 1937:

Frost on the moon
Under your spell
Dear old gal
Trust in me
Let's call a heart a heart

14th January 1937:

One, two, button your shoe
If my heart could only talk
Oh! Miss Hannah
The night is young
When my dreamboat comes home

21st January 1937:

I'm in a dancing mood
I can't lose that longing for
Swinging down the lane (you
I'll sing you a thousand love
And so do I (songs

28th January 1937:

Frost on the moon
In the chapel in the moonlight
Kalua
Under your spell
Moonlight and shadows

4th February 1937:

With plenty of money and you
There's something in the air
When my dreamboat comes home
In the shade of the old apple
Close to me (tree

11th February 1937:

You do the darndest things
My melancholy baby
The night is young
Goodnight, my love
Pennies from Heaven

18th February 1937:

I love you, from coast to coast
Blue Hawaii
Sweet is the word for you
Sweet Leilani
Dardanella

25th February 1937

Twinkle, twinkle, little star.
There's something in the air
Night and day
Sweet is the word for you
Moonlight and shadows.

4th March 1937:

Gee, but you're swell
Sweet Leilani
Memories
What will I tell my heart?
Serenade in the night

11th March 1937:

Twinkle, twinkle, little star
Too marvellous for words
Darktown Strutters' Ball
In a little Hula Heaven
I can't lose that longing for you

18th March 1937:

Slumming on Park Avenue
Trust in me
I wonder who's kissing her now
The mood that I'm in
Blue Hawaii

25th March 1937:

In a little Hula Heaven
My little buckeroo
By the light of the silv'ry moon
What will I tell my heart?
Moonlight and shadows.

1st April 1937:

Boo-hoo
Sweet is the word for you
Where the blue of the night
Goodnight, my love.
Serenade in the night

8th April 1937:

Little old lady
Sweet Leilani
Ma! He's making eyes at me
Too marvellous for words
Let's call the whole thing off
The one rose.

15th April 1937:

Boo-hoo
The mood that I'm in
Back home again in Indiana
Blue Hawaii

22nd April 1937:

One in a million
Alabamy bound
Little old lady
Moonlight and shadows

29th April 1937:

You're here, you're there
Sentimental & Melancholy
My little Buckeroo
Put on your old grey bonnet
Sweet Leilani

6th May, 1937:

How could you?
Carelessly
I'd climb the highest mountain
What will I tell my heart?
The one rose.

13th May 1937:

Swing high, swing low
September in the rain
My buddy
Sentimental & melancholy
Turn off the moon

20th May 1937:

In a little Hula Heaven
Never in a million years
Limehouse blues
Carelessly
Sweet Leilani

27th May 1937:

How could you?
You're here, you're there
Time on my hands
My little buckeroo
Where are you?

3rd June 1937:

Wake up and live
September in the rain
Runnin' wild
Never in a million years
Turn off the moon

10th June 1937:

It looks like rain in Cherry (Blossom Lane
They can't take that away from (me
Casey Jones
There's a lull in my life
Where are you?
*Sail along, silv'ry moon

*Duet with Willian Frawley.

17th June 1937:

The merry-go-round broke down
On a little dream ranch
Garden of tomorrow
Sailboat in the moonlight
Sweet Leilani

24th June 1937:

They all laughed
Was it rain?
Then I'll be happy
There's a lull in my life
Dancing under the stars

1st July, 1937:

Smarty
Its the natural thing to do
My heart stood still
All you want to do is dance
The moon got in my eyes. (Cont....

The last programme listed, that of 1st July, 1937, marked the end of the first eighteen months of what was destined to be the marathon KMH for Bing. He went on vacation until October 7th, 1937 and when the show was resumed on 7th October of that year a significant change had taken place - John Scott Trotter had replaced Jimmy Dorsey as the musical director.

Jimmy, sometimes with brother Tommy, of course, led one of America's best-known bands for the next 20 years or so. JST remained as Bing's musical director on radio and records, and occasionally in films, for almost as long.

The song listing of the KMH so far provokes endless thought. Firstly perhaps, one is acutely aware of the truly golden treasury which has, except as stated, the odd fragments which mysteriously surface now and then, disappeared for ever.

Secondly it is pertinent to recall that this not inconsiderable radio stint was only part of Bing's 'scene' as it were. At this time he was making two or three films a year, as well as visiting the Decca studios regularly for an endless stream of records! In between times he had a family to care for, golf to play (!) horses to observe - and charity performances. And right to the end, when he was performing and singing in his renowned, splendidly unique style, at the age of 74, he maintained it was not work, certainly not hard, that he was "lucky" and so on. To anyone who cares to think about it, his work-rate was phenomenal, granted even that singing came easily to him - and that he loved doing so.

It must be conceded that interest in this listing of KMH songs will be provoked mainly to those of an age to remember the years of the 30's, remember the songs when they were first popular. Even so, younger members should find this evidence of what Bing was singing at that time should also be of interest.

You will note his film songs took their place - tho' not unduly. It cannot be said that Bing plugged his films songs mercilessly or otherwise. Then again, it can be added that such plugging was unnecessary. The records were in demand before they were made!

To the songs themselves however. It was our first intention to mark with an asterisk or some other means, the songs which Bing had NOT commercially recorded. Further thought decided us that you would prefer, perhaps, to amuse yourselves browsing thro' them and checking with BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD.

But even those who, like the writer, remember the 30's very well, cannot recall some of the songs Bing sang. ONE NIGHT IN MONTE CARLO, I FOUND A DREAM, I'M YOURS, IF I SHOULD LOSE YOU, WEST WIND, YEARNING for example, and many more.

On the other hand, there were tremendous smash-hits in the 30's like SERENADE IN THE NIGHT (which Bing did not record) CHAPEL IN THE MOONLIGHT (he only recorded 30 years later on the Longines set), THE MUSIC GOES ROUND AND AROUND (never recorded), THE NIGHT IS YOUNG (not until 1976!), CHARMAINE (never), GOODNIGHT MY LOVE (never) SEPTEMBER IN THE RAIN (years later with Buddy Bregman of all people), WAS IT RAIN? (never), IT LOOKS LIKE RAIN (IN CHERRY BLOSSOM LANE) - never! But all sung on the radio One reason that Bing did not

record some of the big hits of the day may be that, while he was perhaps 75 per cent of Decca in those days, the fact remains that the company did have a battery of other famous artists. No doubt it was felt they should share in some of the "hits of the day".

I've wracked my brains over TWINKLE, TWINKLE, LITTLE STAR. I'm sure you will! Not to mention EENY, MEENY, INEY MO!

Although they had with a lot of us fans and collectors, Crosby Christmasses had not yet become traditional on the radio, but you will see that Bing sang ADESTE FIDELIS and SILENT NIGHT at Christmas 1936.

It is surprising, too, that Bing sang so many British-composed songs on the KMH at this time, e.g. DINNER FOR ONE, PLEASE JAMES, I'M IN A DANCING MOOD, EVERYTHING'S IN RHYTHM WITH MY HEART, MY HEART STOOD STILL and others.

And to think he sang that lovely song, WHO IS SYLVIA? - and we'll never hear it.

The mind is inclined to boggle at some of the splendid albums that can, in imagination, be compiled from this listing. My Number One album choice would certainly include:

1. Alone
2. The music goes Round
3. Thanks a million. (This was a big song for Dick Powell)
4. You are my lucky star
5. Dinner for one, please James.
6. Goody, goody

1. A melody from the sky.
2. Who is Sylvia?
3. Until the real thing comes along.
4. Did I remember?
5. I'll sing you a thousand love songs.
6. Charmaine.

Incidentally, Bing sang a song LONG AGO AND FAR AWAY on KMH on 30th July, 1936. Was this the song he recorded so much later - in war-time 1944 can anyone tell us?

I find to my annoyance that I have not included WAS IT RAIN? in my album choice above! It cannot be said this song has become a standard. But it was a lovely song and big in its day. It ran:

Skies were grey, that rainy day,
We parted in the lane.
Was it tears that fell -
Or was it rain?

There we stood as lovers should,
Did parting bring you pain?
Was it tears that fell -
Or was it rain?

I couldn't tell if your eyes were misty,
Or if you felt regret.
I noticed when you kissed me,
That both your cheeks were wet.

Till we meet again my sweet,
This memory will remain -
Was it tears that fell -
Or was it rain?

Prosaic in print (must be an old romantic!) - but can you 'hear' Bing singing that to an attractive melody? I know at least one member who will be considerably moved at the thought....a lady wrote to me only recently about this song....

OH BROTHER!

In the March issue of BING we mulled over BROTHER CAN YOU SPARE A DIME? in the "DISCROSBY" feature. We - naively as it turned out! - admitted to a certain ignorance concerning the writers of this telling 'depression era' composition. We even suggested that they might be "one-hit" writers! Members seemed to queue up to enlighten us - for which our grateful thanks - but we decided the best way we could adjust matters was to use the effort of a Swedish member, namely RUNE EDVARDSSON, of Aspvagen 6, 640 43 Arla, of that country.

Rune asked us especially to correct his English: "Normally I am just lapping up the information, highly valuable, in this interesting and readable magazine so for a change it would be nice for me to contribute something even if it does not concern the Great Man more than peripherically. You must promise me one thing though, should you use what follows - and that is to correct and check my English. You know, not being English or having English as your mother tongue might tend to make your writing a bit stilted". Thus Rune - but we can assure members that not a word, not a comma, has been altered from what he actually wrote!

---

n page 37 of your March issue you discuss the song-writing team of GORNEY and HARBURG. I agree with you, that although perhaps not a 'one-hit' writer GORNEY is rather obscure but, apart from his participation in BROTHER CAN YOU SPARE A DIME, he did write extensively for Broadway shows both during the 'Twenties and the 'Thirties. His full name was Jay Gorney, born December 12, 1896, in Bialystok, Russia (extraordinary how many tune-smiths that hail from Russia!) His was the music for BROTHER CAN YOU SPARE A DIME?. The lyrics were supplied by E. Y. Harburg and it all happened in 1932 when the song was used in a stage show called AMERICANA which opened May 10, 1932, and ran 77 performances. There were, of course, other songs in this particular show (like WHISTLING FOR A KISS composed by J. Mercer, SATAN'S LITTLE LAMB by Vernon Duke and Burton Lane).

Anyway, Jay Gorney began his composing in the mid-20's, having arrived from Russia to the US in 1906 at the age of 10. He was educated in Detroit and attended the University of Michigan and simultaneously with conventional education he also received extensive musical training, so much so that during his school years he led a band. At the outbreak of World War II he enlisted in the navy.

During the New Sound Era of the Motion Picture Industry he got his big chance and was for some time head of the Music Department of the Paramount Pictures Astoria Studios in New York. He,like so many others, ended up in Hollywood and worked for 20th Century Fox from 1933 until the 40's, when he produced films for Columbia.

Even if Gorney wrote songs for some 15 stage shows and at least four films during the period 1924-1949 very few of the song titles

have survived in people's memory. I myself can think of only two other tunes besides BROTHER CAN YOU SPARE A DIME? that one can recognise, viz., WHAT WOULDN'T I DO FOR THAT MAN? and YOU'RE MY THRILL.

So much for GORNEY. E. Y. (Yip) HARBURG on the other hand, who wrote the lyrics to BROTHER... is a much more prominent figure. He was two years younger than Gorney, thus born 1898 on April 8 in New York. Suffice it to mention the following tunes (lyrics) which came from his pen: APRIL IN PARIS, ITS ONLY A PAPER MOON, WHAT IS THERE TO SAY?, YOU'RE A BUILDER-UPPER, LET'S TAKE A WALK AROUND THE BLOCK, OVER THE RAINBOW, HAPPINESS IS JUST A THING CALLED JOE, HOW ARE THINGS IN GLOCCA MORRA. His chief collaborators on the musical side for the tunes were HAROLD ARLEN, JOHNNY GREEN, VERNON DUKE and BURTON LANE (with which he made the fine score for FINIAN'S RANBOW in 1947, and even JEROME KERN.

YIP HARBURG started out fairly late as a song writer. He was, in fact, in the electrical appliance business up till 1929.

Editor: We're more than a little ashamed that we cannot even say Thank you, Rune - in Swedish for a faultless, even stylish piece of writing in English. Merci beaucoup, danke-schoen, mucho gracias is all very well - but Swedish....Rune surely is to be congratulated not only on his knowledge of the composers concerned but also his writing.

As we said earlier, many members did put themselves out to let us know about Gorney and Harburg. MR. W. H. EWERT, for instance, took us a little further when he confirmed that "Yip Harburg was certainly no 'one-hit' writer; he died in a car crash in Hollywood on 5th March 1981 at the age of 83". Mr. Ewert (7 Elfin Drive, Ferndown, Dorset) also gave us an almost endless list of the songs in which Yip had been concerned with a string of eminent melody-writers.

Yet another fascinating contribution came from BERNARD J. DENHAM, (795 Greer Rd., Palo Alto, California 94303, USA) in the form of extracts from the prestigious volume, DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN HISTORY, which tells about THE BIG BROTHER MOVEMENT. Reference back (again!) to the March issue and the GENERAL ELECTRIC RADIO SHOWS and Programme No. 55 which carried the intriguing and cryptic item: Salute to the Big Brother Movement: by Bing. We commented that it was unlikely they were referring to George Orwell's 1984 novel and its big brother. The dictionary referred to above explains:

"In 1903 (coincidentally the year in which Bing was born) a small group of men in Cincinnati, Ohio, following an appeal by Irvin F. Westheimer, a young stockbroker, agreed to take an interest individually in fatherless boys in that city. The movement was formalized in New York City a year later by Ernest K. Coulter, clerk of the children's court. At present there are 210 member agencies of a national organization, Big Brothers of America, formed in 1947, with headquarters in Philadelphia, Pa., and officially chartered by an Act of Congress in 1958. As of January 1974 about 100,000 Bif Brother-Little Brother assign-

ments were active throughout the United States. A similar, but separate confederation of Big Brothers' agencies exists in Canada, with approximately fifty agencies serving 20,000 boys. "

So, this was the organisation that Bing was saluting in his CBC radio show of 10 January 1954.

Mr. Denham also sent us some extracts from a publication - CURRENT BIOGRAPHY 1980, which dealt with such a work on Edgar Yipsel, HARBURG. More interesting extracts from this work include:

"HARBURG ranks along with Sammy Cahn, Lorenz Hart, Ira Gershwin and Oscar Hammerstein 2nd among the dozen or so great lyricists of American popular music....long active in left-wing politics, Harburg was blacklisted by Hollywood in the late 1940's. His strong convictions, born of his poverty-stricken childhood, are reflected in much of his writing...

But the song that made perhaps the greatest impact on AMERICANA (stage show) audiences and eventually became a sort of unofficial anthem for the Depression was the mournful ballad, BROTHER CAN YOU SPARE A DIME? with music by Jay Gorney. "It was a terrible period," Harburg recalled in an interview. "You couldn't walk along the street without seeing people standing in breadlines...so miserable...

From another book, THEY'RE PLAYING OUR SONG by MAX WILK :

" If you've been fortunate enough to listen to E. Y. Harburg sing his own lyrics and discuss the hows and whys of such classics as BROTHER CAN YOU SPARE A DIME, OVER THE RAINBOW, HOW ARE THINGS IN GLOCCA MORRA and APRIL IN PARIS, either in the YMHA auditorium in Manhattan or on various television shows, you won't need to be reminded of the electric excitement and the amazing nostalgic warmth he communicates. He lights up the stage and the tube with a high-voltage rating of near-incandescence.

"When Jay (Gorney) played me the tune he had, I thought of that phrase of the breadlines...Can you spare a dime? It kept running through my mind as I was walking the streets. And by putting the word 'brother' to the line, I got started on it...

"But I thought that lyric out carefully. I didn't make it a maudlin lyric of a guy begging. I made it into a commentary. That may shound rhetorical, but its true. It was about the fellow who works, the fellow who builds, who makes the railroads and the houses - and he's left empty-handed. How come? How did this happen? Didn't I fight the wars, didn't I bear the gun, didn't I plow the earth? In other words, the fellow who produces is the fellow who's left empty-handed in the end..."

And if you re-read the penultimate paragraph on page 36 of the March issue it will be seen that we madea fairly accurate diagnosis of the lyric-writer's thoughts on the song, BROTHER CAN YOU SPARE A DIME?

BING
A VOICE FOR ALL SEASONS

A NEW BOOK BY SHELDON O'CONNELL WITH GORD ATKINSON, BASED ON THE LATTER'S AWARD-WINNING RADIO SERIES, "THE CROSBY YEARS".

Since Bing's lamented demise in 1977 there has been what might be described as a spate of books about him and his career. Thompson, Thomas, Ken Barnes, Kathryn - Gary take their place among the authors, with many other booklets &c. Their readability - and credibility - varied considerably - some were comparatively shallow, others interesting, some were deliberate, venomous, money-making attempts to change the image of Mr. Crosby the world had held for over 50 years. Some told of what Bing whispered in a certain ear, no doubt of interest more to the feminine following.

And most had, perforce, to mention inevitably Congzaga, Bing's law aspirations, the Rhythm Boys after the trek to California from Spokane....Paul Whiteman, Mack Sennett, the Big Broadcast of 1932, Dixie Lee, the four boys....and so on. So, it was with what might be described as a mental groan that we heard, through a circuitous route, that a NEW BOOK ON BING was in the offing.

> Further, a discography and filmography (of sorts) is de rigueur. So what can be <u>new</u>? Can this be the book the more profound Crosby admirer is looking for - a touch of Dr. Mize - and someone who really <u>knows</u> the Crosby story apart from the aforementioned? After all, we have BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD and all the other volumes.

So, it was with a feeling closely akin to jaundice that we finally received the long-promised book. And right away, let us say how nice it is to be surprised, very pleasantly surprised, for Sheldon O'Connell, a Canadian associated with broadcasting, has produced a splendid book. It is very readable indeed and we are pleased to be in possession of it.

The book is an unusual shape in that it is about eight inches aquare; the cover is not of the hardback variety but a glossy card material. We hope the ship hasn't been spoiled for an 'apporth of tar for we feel the contents of the book warranted a hardback cover to give it more durability and decoration, not that the cover used is entirely unsuitable.

It has a foreword by Rich Little, the famous impressionist, who was present at the statue dedication in Gonzage; and introduction by legendary comedian/singer Phil Harris. There are 250 pages containing 25 Chapters and is profusely - really profusely - illtrated. Indeed, there are familiar photographs and many which are very rare- of the many that fascinated your reviewer was a family picture of Bing with his brothers and their wives, and his mother.

The photographs are beautifully reproduced as is the whole thing; good quality paper, clear print.

> Many UK collectors and members of ours are mentioned, e.g. Colin Pugh, who apart from his mammoth collection, compiled THE ALTERNATE BING CROSBY (mentioned in the book), Messrs. JOYCE, BISHOP and BASSETT whose BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD is utilised in a concise discography. Leslie Gaylor is well featured as is Frank Murphy - the latter on account of his photo-collecting activities, providing some of the pictures used in the book.

A reduced-in-size cover of BING is also included amongst the collectors and'collectables' chapter. The film section is abbreviated but invaluable for reference and contains all the relevant details. Many album sleeves are f ithfully reproduced, similarly reduced in size but losing nothing in clarity.

The book is dedicated to MEN TWISS for his heroic activities as founder and president of the BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY It should be added that the scores of pictures include Bing on duty, as it were, and certainly off-duty, as well as splendid film 'stills'.

Additionally, there are views on Bing by people like Pat Boone, Tony Bennett (who among other things says: "He (Bing) contributedmore to American music than any other one single person. I have loved every second of all he's ever done...beautiful movies and records..."); Sinatra and many, many others which come over as new. These, no doubt, were obtained during Gordon Atkinson's investigations and researches for his radio series, THE CROSBY YEARS.

> In more sombre, yet fitting, fashion, the book ends with a full-page colour reproduction of Bing's grave - a picture many are keen to have.

So, to business: how much does this cost? £10, post paid - and as the postage comes to over £1.00 the real cost of the book is £8-odd. I ..ensive? What's expensive these days, alas? To some, it will be but we certainly know what production costs are these days. And look around any bookshop to realise today's values. Members will make up their own minds; we think the book makes excellent, entertaining, reading - and is also informative. A book well worth having.

It is published by:

KERRYMAN PUBLICATIONS,
TRALEE,
CO. KERRY,
IRELAND

(to whom you should write with remittance)

and to repeat, the cost is £10 inclusive of post and packing - and it is quite a weighty tome. We might have added the names of Perry Como and Bob Crosby as among those speaking on Bing - and certainly Gary who was most appreciative and affectionate regarding his Dad! We congratulate Sheldon O'Connell, Gordon Atkinson and all associated with this publication. (US/CAN inclusive price is 20 dollars)

PRIZE BING-O

£100

TO BE WON BY AN ICC MEMBER !

The last thing we would want to appear as is the puerile daily tabloids - but the situation is ANY member is invited to enter a competition - with the prize indicated to go to the winner: FRED FOLEY writes:

Who would have thought that my wife's innocent trip to a local rummage sale would eventually lead me on a trail that has given me great pleasure and a period of revelation.

My wife brought home a hundle of books, one of which she cast aside. I picked it up - and was hooked! The book was Brian Rust's about the early dance-band era. Its not the sort of book I would normally give a second glance but it is so well written that I began to delve further and lo! and behold, Bing Crosby, the master of public music was implanted firmly in my mind and has led me along strange paths to meet some of the finest people.It has been a revelation to me. A whole era, from Prohibition to Bing's death has been laid before me with the help of your members. My progress from the record I'VE GOT THE GIRL to the BBC's recording of ONCE IN A WHILE has taken me from post-Great War through World War II and all of this by courtesy of your members' efforts to assist. Some I may mention. You yourself, Editor, who gave me my first hearing of the Bing Crosby I previously had only a nodding acquaintance with; Bert Bishop (Chelmsford) and John Joyce (Gateshead) have been boons to me, providing tapes and information.

Many more have helped. Their names I must withold to protect their privacy. But to these members, and they should read this, I give a big THANK YOU!

I've read the controversial books on Bing and after listening to so many hours of the artist maligned, I cannot equate the findings of the authors with the artist I read about and listen to. Whatever is written about Bing, no one can detract from the artist with his label of UNIQUE and almost perfect 50 years of recording.

Now Mr. Editor Reg, to enable me to get the opinions of the many listeners to Bing I would like TO DONATE A PRIZE OF £100 to the person giving a list of favourite recordings of the 1930-1940 period. Anyone wishing to participate should send a tape of their 30 favourite recordings from this period WITH ANY COMMENTS ON WHY THEY HAVE MADE THEIR CHOICE. I would like it to be a Christmas prize so we could declare the winner in the Christmas number of BING. This will give me time to evaluate the tapes, comments &c.

Near this time I would ask you for a copy of YOUR 30 selections and I will then send to you the readers who have chosen an identical list. If more than one you can draw from the "hat" to find the winner. This is a project that, if it meets with your approval, could benefit my studies.

Editor: We gladly accept the offer. 30 records can usually be got onto a C90 cassette, though possibly slight editing may be necessary. Be sure to include a WRITTEN list in addition to the tape, with your comments on your choice. Quality of recording will NOT be a con-

sideration though obviously the better the quality the easier it will be for the judging! GET HELP IF YOU ARE NOT AN EXPERT CASSETTE RECORDIST! And make sure your name and address is on your list.

The cassette and listed comments should be sent to :

MR. FRED FOLEY,
27 PEEL STREET,
CARLISLE,
CUMBRIA.

There is no deadline EXCEPT that evaluation will take time so that the sooner you can get your entries to Mr. Foley the better, who hopes there will be at least an adequate response. The £100 has already been deposited with us - and the winner, counting on sufficient response, will be announced in the Christmas issue and receive the prize well before the Yuletide holiday. One thing, the tapes will NOT be returnable.

You will note that I become the agonised arbiter! I hope I have to give NOBODY my word that nothing of my choice will be revealed to anyone UNTIL MR. FOLEY RECEIVES IT AT HIS OWN REQUEST.

Clearly, this will be quite a demanding task - to enter, I mean! But making a choice of 30 songs is 30 times better than having to name a single record as THE BEST - which we've often attempted to do. It should provide hours of thought and browsing -- and with the chance of a substantial prize for your enjoyable task.

Mr. Foley is a comparatively new member but clearly a dedicated one. He hopes to get from your tapes and comments vital information on a project he is undertaking. So, have a go! And good luck. Need we add, as a final word, THAT THE DECISION OF MR. FOLEY AND YOURS TRULY, The Editor, WILL BE FINAL.

WITH DEEP REGRET WE HAVE TO RECORD the passing of two of our members. MR. J. SHARP, of 43 Belle Vue Gardens, Belle Vue Rd., Southbourne, Bournemouth, Dorset died in February last and Mrs. Sharp told us, among other things: "My husband got so much pleasure out of belonging to the Circle and in playing his records and tapes of Bing. To cheer him up just about a week before he went into hospital I'd play one of his tapes and it did the trick: he was happy. I have lots of records and books to sell if anyone in this part of the country is interested....I'm sure lots of people do get pleasure from your magazine so please keep up the good work....." So, South Coast members may be able to help Mrs. Sharp.

And it was with considerable shock that we learned of the sudden death of MR. J. B. (Jim) BARBER, of 306 Swanwick Lane, Lower Swanwick, near Southampton. Jim was one of those genial, affable, characters so typical of theCrosby Circle and had made a wider circle of friends as a result of attending the big event at London's Waldorf in 1983. He was also a regular and popular attender at The Southampton branch and also the meetings of the Southern Bing Crosby society of Phil Clarke. Ena Hooley was among many so distressed at Jim's demise. He had been exceptionally kind and helpful in getting her to and from such meetings. Our condolences to both families.

ON THE SOCIAL SIDE

AMERICAN VISITORS FOR LEEDS MEETING

It is now almost certain that a large influx of our friends from America will be at the Leeds event this autumn, scheduled for SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30TH. The US visitors will be incorporating this visit in a grand European tour. Initial difficulties have been ironed; originally Stateside opinion was that the event was a Saturday affair but they have now amended their itinerary to take in Leeds, on the Sunday mentioned.

Interesting as the Leeds meeting always is, the presence of our Transatlantic friends will make it a special event this year. No doubt many of our members who have visited the States in the past few years will take the opportunity to renew contact with the friends they made during their trips.

There will be another issue of BING before the event - but make a note of the date. And MICHAEL CRAMPTON, in charge of arrangements in Leeds, is at:

19 CARRHOLM CRESCENT,
CHAPEL ALLERTON,
LEEDS,
WEST YORKS.

Phone: 0532 - 689556

Michael will greatly appreciate early intimation of your intention to attend although at this stage, of course, we cannot give the price of tickets. They will, as usual, be the cost of the meal which will no doubt be as excellent as usual. Programme will be plenty of Bing songs via records, tapes, films, video, quizzes with prizes - and, clearly, plenty of conversation! AND, a reasonably-priced bar! A food attendance is anticipated - but let Michael know!

Meanwhile, the North-Eastern event planned for the Spring duly took place:

*** A MAY EVENING IN GATESHEAD ***

(Reported by PHIL MORGAN)

The Washington suite in the Five Bridges Hotel at Gateshead again provided the venue for "An evening with Bing Crosby" on Friday May 11 th last.

It was a beautiful evening as regards the weather; following a day of sunshine it was a balmy evening and thus brought to reality the setting WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT MET THE GOLD OF THE DAY!

The attendance was around seventy, coming from near and far. Proceedings were opened by the organiser, JOHN JOYCE, who extended a warm welcome to all, especially perhaps those who had travelled from

afar and these included Arthur and Eileen Allum who had motored up that day from Felixtowe; Frank and Rita Briggs from Hull, Michael and Judith Crampton from Leeds, George and Mary Haywood from Cambridge, Frank and Phoebe Armstrong from London and Paula Sangster and Grace Burton, also both from London.

Introductions completed, music and conversation took over until the arrival of the meal which went down exceedingly well. For those interested, here is the bill of fare:

1. Florida Cocktail
2. Steak and kidney pie, with roast potatoes and garden peas.
3. Cheesecake
4. Coffee

This proved most enjoyable. Indeed, I feel the Five Bridges must have a reputation for steak and kidney pie because we had this on the last occasion and it was repeated, apparently, by "popular demand".

Following the meal - and I must also mention the excellent bar facilities - the evening proceeded with dancing, quizzes and records. Two films were shewn, the Mack Sennett 'short' WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT and a 'condensed' version of HIGH SOCIETY by which I mean the songs only were featured. Both films were very well received.

Later in the evening we received a visit from Peter Hetherington who presents the MEMORIES programme on Metro Radio. He gave a short address during which he pointed out that a large proportion of his mail contained requests for Bing Crosby records. He also told of an occasion when he was with the BBC and was producing a programme about Bing. He had phoned Bing's house for help; Bing answered the phone personally and proved very friendly and helpful.

During the evening I had a similar story told me though I'm ashamed to say I cannot remember the chap's name! It happened during one of Bing's visits over here abd my informant told me he'd discovered where Bing was staying. He telephoned the hotel, told them he was a member of the ICC - and could he have a word with Bing? He got a reply that Bing had just got in and was tired but that they would get in touch and see if he would speak. Sure enough, Bing did and the two had a most pleasant conversation lasting eight or nine minutes. Another example of Bing's nature no doubt. There was no need for him to come to the phone for a stranger. One can't think of many "stars" who would have done such a generous thing.

However, the evening ended around midnight and the six hours had really flown by. There was no doubting everyone had had a good time and plans are already being made for the next event on Friday, 12th October next.

One must give all credit to JOHN JOYCE who organised the whole thing so well and who obviously put in some tremendous hard work. That all had a great evening must be some reward to him.

Editor: Hear hear! I must say, the idea of editing films so that just the songs appear on the video tape is a great one. There is seldom time to watch through a complete film at these events and that solves the proble nicely - and gives people what they really want to hear.

Continuing the social side, we learn that the resuscitated photo club, i.e. THE NEW BING CROSBY PHOTO CLUB, is planning an event for SEPTEMBER 15th next at THE CAIRN HOTEL, Osborne Road, Jesmond, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, ostensibly to celebrate its first year anniversary. Tickets are £5.75 "FOR THE FULL DAY" it says in the announcement - and by the way, we note a new publicity director seems to be operating with a style we recognise but cannot immediately name to further the cause - a kind of DAZ or PERSIL agent-style! With starter-packs &c. - we almost expected to read the "4p OFF!" Slogan. But, there, forgive us our whimsicality. There will be the usual fare of films, video, records - a good restaurant and so on. Tickets from FRANK MURPHY, 32 Ferndale Avenue, Wallsend, TYNE & WEAR. The aforementioned literature also waxes most enthusistic about the new photos of Bing and friends available, with the accent now on brilliant colour. A BULLETIN is also issued and current rates are, we understand: U.K. £2.00 per annum, Continent £3.00 Overseas £4 "for your quick turnaround and regular keeping in touch bonus...YOU GET FIVE BRAND NEW ISSUES EVERY QUARTER" (that's photos, no doubt).

So there it is; a function next September and new colour pictures if you are that way inclined. You see the name and address: if enquiring, ALWAYS enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

ON THE FOLLOWING TWO PAGES are reproductions of items culled from our files; the type of things from the past we know members, perhaps especially younger ones, like to see.

The first item gives an ecclesiastical view of Bing; Bing's strong catholic faith, abetted by the Father O'Malley roles, always seem to bring this personal side of Bing's up for discussion. Whether it should or not is a moot point perhaps.

The second is one of those unsung, unpublicised charitable efforts which make such a nonsense of the puerile attempts to denigrate this"regular guy".

The next deals with another perennial topic for writers - Bing's money and business interests! Careless of us not to be able to give the dates of these cuttings but most of them give good clues.

Then the full-page BING - THE BENIGN BALLADEER. Well, its a lovely and fitting heading. And the story itself is readable - especially if you appreciate some of Bing's tongue-in-cheek (we believe!) tributes to modern groups.

> But the beginning! Almost destroys the credibility of the whole story. Read the very first senfence! I ask you - whoever saw Bing in a shabby, ill-fitting dinner-suit? Surely Mr. Norrie Drummond, whoever he is, must be the only one. We've heard of journalistic license but this, surely, comes under the heading of JOURNALISTIC ABSURDITY.

True, Bing's casual disregard for sartorial elegance when playing golf, or recording, or indulging in his many off-duty pursuits, is well known. But when elegance was called for - as at the Palladium - it was there. Shabby, ill-fitting...RUBBISH!

His Catholic Faith always came first

IN a personal tribute to the late Bing Crosby, Fr. Charles Lynch, Information Officer for the Diocese, told the Pictorial: 'Bing Crosby was a delightfully warm and informal person.

'He was a man for whom the practice of his Catholic faith came first in his life. He disliked fuss and every Sunday evening he would slip into the back row of St. Bartholomew's Church in San Francisco and slip quietly away again after Mass.'

The world famous singer found sanctuary at the Church from autograph hunters: 'There was a sort of gentlemen's agreement,' explained Fr. Lynch. 'People would say hello to him and that was all.'

It was while he was on a working holiday in the parish that Fr. Lynch met the singer. That was in 1971. After a brief visit to Bing's house one Saturday the singer presented him with an autographed photograph in the sacristy after Mass the following day.

Fr. Lynch shares Bing's fanaticism for golf. At the time of his meeting he was a curate at Sacred Heart parish, Wigan, and he asked Bing for a photograph of himself dedicated to the club. That photograph still hangs behind the bar today.

Bing Crosby was a devout Catholic. He was born Harry Lillis Crosby in Washington seventy-three years ago. He was educated by Jesuit priests at the Gonzaga High School and his singing lessons ended when his teacher tried to make him do breathing exercises. He attended the Gonzaga University, Sokane where he joined a local band.

A regular guy

NO wonder Bing Crosby, back in Britain for two weeks at the London Palladium, earns the title of nice guy from everybody he comes into contact with. I can't ever remember reading a criticism about his behaviour, his attitudes to life or his reactions under pressure.

He promised to do a show for the Yorkshire NSPCC while he was in Britain, but no theatre could be found for the show. As he wasn't able to do what he had promised and give his effort to raise money for the charity, he sent the money instead—a gift of £2,500.

It takes a monumentally nice guy to dip his hand into his own pocket to make up for a broken promise which wasn't even his fault he couldn't keep.

The man is one of nature's gentlemen. He has had his share of the good life, but you do feel it couldn't happen to a nicer guy.

BUSINESSMAN CROSBY

BOB HOPE calls his pal Bing not only "Old Tonsils"–but "a Walking Corporation." For Bing is a canny businessman with eggs in several baskets–in case the "old tonsils" ever wear out. Besides his brand-new seven-year contracts with Paramount Pictures, Decca Records and the Columbia Broadcasting System, Bing owns, among other things, some of Minute Maid Corp., Bing Crosby Casual Shirts, Crosby Enterprises, Inc., the Pittsburgh Pirates–and three gushing oil wells. But with the help of top-flight people like Bill Morrow, one of the best radio writer-producers in the business, Crosby wears his responsibilities lightly. His gait is as carefree as ever, his shirts as wild, his hats as rakish. For Bing remains at heart America's Crooner –one of the greats of show business.

Bing — the benign balladeer

by Norrie Drummond

The elderly little man in the ill-fitting and somewhat shabby looking dinner suit, walks into the limelight. He walks carefully, somewhat unsteadily and then you realise he is after all 73 years old.

He gazes round the packed auditorium obviously delighted at the rapturous welcome, smiles at his musical director and begins to sing.

The songs he has chosen are smooth and easy on the ear as is the voice — a voice which has probably been heard more often, by more people than that of any mortal in history.

This is the man whose record sales far outnumber any other's — an estimated 400 million, give or take the odd million. And this is Bing Crosby singing a tiny fraction of them again at the London Palladium for his many friends in Britain.

As an institution Bing has lasted for more years than most. His appeal is a bit like that of a battered teddy bear with big ears and wide eyes.

He is relaxed to the point of disinterest — or so it seems — but beneath that outward and very sincere charm lies a tough, show business professional with a shrewd business sense.

One American critic once observed: "When we hear Bing Crosby, we hear the voice of an old and treasured friend." And how true that is.

Even in a theatre the size of the Palladium, the man radiates warmth and humility. Between songs he chats comfortably with his audience, recounting episodes of his life and career. And it is all done in a remarkably low-key fashion.

But then the world has been encouraged to accept that he has an average-man voice. There is, of course, his famous quote about anyone believing they can sing as well as he, especially in the bathroom. He even entitled his autobiography **Call Me Lucky.**

There is a charming consistency about the man, the performer, the legend. All along the line he's just Mr. Average pursuing the average hobbies, fishing, horse-racing and of course golf.

Not for him the gaudy the garish or the flamboyant and he always avoided most of the usual showbiz trimmings and razzmatazz.

Part of Bing Crosby's unique success must surely lie in the fact that he has always — even from his very early days — kept abreast of the times.

He is familiar with all that goes on around him. He knows which groups are popular with today's teenagers and also regularly sees new films. There are several aspects of the modern cinema industry which he dislikes, but by and large if a film has quality then he will appreciate it.

Bing and his wife, Kathryn, who takes part in his show.

And quality is something which is important to him whether it's in respect of films, songs or people.

"There are great songs nowadays," he says, "and great singers and songwriters — names such as Jimmy Webb, James Taylor, Neil Diamond, Bacharach, Sondheim and Mancini. I could go on all day.

"And there are more groups and better ones. Modulation and harmony is above anything we ever did.

"Of course, being my age I do look back to people like Satchmo and Teagarden and Duke, who was the greatest musician of them all and one of the nicest guys."

He says the most talented woman he knew was Judy Garland. "She was a great girl. She could sing, dance, act, make you laugh or make you cry. She was everything."

Discounting music and golf, Bing's great love is for his wife and teenage family.

After the death in 1955 of his first wife Dixie Lee, he married actress Kathryn Grant two years later and started a second family — Harry Lillis Jr., Mary Frances and Nathaniel Patrick.

Son Harry and wife Kathy appear with Bing at the Palladium where his show is running until the end of next week. Also with him are the delightful Rosemary Clooney and comedian Ted Rogers.

Away from showbusiness his business interests are legion. He has acquired oilfields, race tracks, orange juice factory, a cattle ranch and gold and uranium interests among many other things.

As his long-time friend and mock-feuding partner Bob Hope says: "He doesn't pay taxes. He just calls up the Treasury and asks how much they need."

*** SHORT POINTS ***

Regrettably omitted from the March issue were donations to the purchase of the Crosby home by:

SYLVIA LAWRENCE (Cambridge) (2nd donation)
JIM BARBER (now deceased, as you see elsewhere and obviously one of the last things Jim did)
ISABEL and MARY McADAM of Gateshead.
THOS. MOONEY (Dublin)
BRIAN LEWIS (who is delighted to live in CROSBY SQUARE - we've long wanted to do an article on addresses - and the images they conjure up when we address the envelopes!)
HARRY C. ROSS (Westleigh, Portsmouth) 2nd donation.

Inexplicably, there has been a dearth of information on this project from the BCHS. We are making enquiries as to progress.

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If consequent mail is any indication the March issue of BING was very well received. Stacks of mail on BROTHER CAN YOU SPARE A DIME and its writers and assuredly on what Bing says in GOODNIGHT SWEETHEART, as queried by John Stiles. Everyone is quite certain that Bing sings, or rather says, "my love will always GUIDE you..." - while agreeing it is not all that distinct - unusually for Bing. The clinching point is that it has to rhyme with "beside you".....

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"A million tomorrows for one yesterday" lamented Bing in the song TOO LATE. Sounds passionately, remorsefully, dramatic but we work it out that a million tomorrows equals 2,739 years and more! A heavyprice to pay in all conscience! But lyric writers do get that way. Remember Bing could "feel the scent of roses in the air" in JUNE IN JANUARY. Even if you can't 'feel' scent its much nicer than singing "And I can smell the scent of roses in the air..." Do you have a lyric or two that causes you a smile or two? We'd like to know.

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> "When we arrived at Dublin airport thousands of people were lining the balcony to greet him. A boys' band was playing WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT, Bing's signature tune. I turned to say something and saw tears pouring down his face. I had to look away. Until then I hadn't realised the emotional effect this Irish welcome would have on him
>
> A memory of GEORGE O'REILLY, Dublin theatre and artist manager of Bing's first visit to Ireland in 1961 quoted in the new book BING - A VOICE FOR ALL SEASONS reviewed in this issue.

After the flurry of Crosby films over the Christmas holiday the box has been rather bare of Bing. Replies to members from TV controllers seem to indicate that a number of themnow regard such films as "dated" - precisely what that means is for anyone to guess. Anything vintage is bound to be dated - that's its charm. What they really mean, I suppose, is there's no sex, violence, sadism, brutality, or other immoral conduct on show. Be that as it may, did you catch that film about the GI Brides - 40 years on? If not, you miss[ed] one of Bing's rarer 78s - A BOY IN KHAKI A GIRL IN LACE, which was played as both prologue and epilogue to it - sounded great, too. Most fitting.

ON THE RECORD
SCENE ******

track EVENTS

No issues from the giants, alas - that is, MCA, Phillips, RCA, Decca etc. etc., though it does seem that MCA are issuing the 20-title THE VERY BEST OF BING CROSBY on a regular basis (MCF 2540) on record and cassette. Fresh supplies keep turning up in our local shops and, presumably, are sold. Its difficult to imagine any member of the Circle hasn't long had this, of course.

There is, however, plenty of evidence that the record world is a mad, mad, mad, mad one ! I was in a shop the other day and the album just mentioned was on display - two copies, one £2.99 (the usual price) and one £1.99p. I pointed this out to the shop-keeper, certain they had made a labelling error. "No, two copies - each from a different supplier," says he. I asked him which one he expected to sell first! Then consider this letter from TERRY WARDROPE who lives in Tillicoultry, CLACKMANNANSHIRE :

> "Although I haven't seen any new releases of Bing records the other day while shopping in the local town I saw FIVE copies of BING - A MUSICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY (yes, the 5-album set) priced at - wait for it - £3.99! I made a mental note and went off to finish my shopping. Five minutes later I was in another shop browsing through some 'Special Purchase' records and guess what? - yes, another copy of the autobiography set. This time the price was £1.99!"

Goodness knows what some members are still paying for this set - especially at that notorious shop in Covent Garden, London. But, to appreciate the full irony of Terry's discoveries let me tell you that a near-neighbour of mine, a Circle member, is a Scot and one night during a visit I happened to mention we had a member in - Tillicoultry! He was astounded - "That's where I hail from - my parents are buried there...." He got in touch with Mr. Wardrope, and sure enough, he was within sight of the cemetery my neighbour had referred to. NOW: this neighbour has long wanted another copy of the auto-set - he would ring shops as soon as he heard a whisper that they had it - dashed all over South Wales at times ...with no luck. Now, he has to read what Terry Wardrope has found - in Tillicoultry!

Is it a mad, mad, mad, record world ?
Well, there's more evidence to come.

Mr. J. R. Baker (Tonbridge, Kent) startled us by writing that he had picked up some albums of Philco Radio Shows - at £1.99p each! Being mystified, we asked for details, thinking they may be Totems, Spokanes, or similar. No, they were issued here - by BLACK LION RECORDS, which are produced by PHONOCO, 16 Castelnau, London, S.W.13., whose records we have mentioned before in BING. So, we wrote to PHONOCO and confirmed that

they had issued five albums of such shows by arrangement with Crosby Enterprises...AND THE PRICE PER ALBUM WAS £4.50! Mr. Baker was adamant he had paid £1.99! No doubt about it. We don't now the answer. 20p, even 50p 'off' isn't unusual, but £2.51p off? Something wrong, somewhere.

These albums are attractively packaged; 'solid' one-colour overall with an attractive picture of Bing. The shows were broadcast a couple of years back by the BBC and most members will have them on tape. At £1.99 no doubt many would reinforce their tapes with the new shiny albums. But at £4.50 each they will probably think again. There are now five albums available from this source as follows, the first being issued a couple of years ago, the other four are new releases and a fifth is projected:

BLM 52003 Philco Programme 20 of 26/2/47/Prog. 7 of 27/11/46
(Featuring also JUDY GARLAND and THE ANDREWS SISTERS.)

BLM 52013 Philco programme23/10/46 and 8 of (4/12/46
(Featuring also SPIKE JONES and JIMMY DURANTE)

BLM 52023 Philco Prog. No. 21 (5/3/47) and 25 (2/4/47)
(Featuring also Al JOLSON both sides)

BLM 52033 Philo prog. No. 24 (26/3/47)and 37 (1/10/47)
(Featuring also JACK BENNY, PEGGY LEE - PEGGY LEE, GARY COOPER)

BLM 52043 Philco Prog. No. 32 (21/5/40) and 45 (26/11/47)
(Featuring MAURICE CHEVALIER and FRANKIE LAINE.)

The records are well produced and of excellent sound quality for the period. If you want them and don't see them in your shops, you have the address. By the way, to the price of £4.50 you add £1. for post & packing is what they tell us.

From records you can get in a reasonable way, we turn to a set, the acquisition of which is likely to be extremely difficult - and we don't particularly enjoy putting these records 'on view' as it were. Still, in the interests of completeness we do. There is a set now from JAPAN again entitled BING SINGS 50 POP STANDARDS (VIM 14, 15,16) The titles are:

Side 1: Stardust/The Very thought of you/The touch of your lips/The Way you look tonight/Too marvellous for words/The folks who live on the hill/Basin St. Blues/Swing low, sweet chariot.
Side 2: Summertime/My melancholy baby/I Cried for you/I Surrender,Dear/When I lost you/A nightingale sang in Berkeley Square/Mandy is two.
Side 3: Skylark/Blues in the night/Easter Parade/By the light of the silvery moon/It could happen to you/Night and day/Begin the beguine/Like someone in love.
Side 4: Out of this world/These foolish things/Just one of those things/Temptation/Baby won't you please come home/Give me the simple life/Sweet Lorraine/All through the day
Side 5: Ol' man river/On the sunny side of the street/They say its wonderful/Alexander's ragtime band/Embraceable you/Pretty baby/Golden earrings/Love me or leave me/So in love.
Side 6: Autumn leaves/Then you've never been blue/Indian summer/Hush-a-bye/What a little moonlight can do/Ain't misbehavin'/More than you know/Rain/Georgia on my mind.

While, inevitably, offering substantial duplication this is nevertheless a well-thought-out and desirable collection, with many not-easy-to-find recordings. But where to get it? It may turn up in specialised shops at goodness knows what price. We're repeating oursevles - but how on earth is it that Japan produces these sets? Perhaps they've noticed Britain and America aren't interested - and as with most other things they're on the ball. Let's hope they don't take up cricket.....we're losing out everywhere else! There are more than enough making mugs of us!

DISC crosby

We've a feeling we've mentioned this before - perhaps recently! Its not that we're getting too old and fuddled - just haven't the time to check back. What we have in mind is - to some of us - the startling fact that the long-playing record, or album, has now been with us for 30 years or more! To think that we have members young enough not to know pre-LP days! It hardly seems possible that thirty years have elapsed since the amazing development of the micro-groove issues.

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We've become accustomed, of course, to buying a record with 12 titles on it and to recall the days when a single 78rpm record was a wholly delightful acquisition should seem far back, shrouded in the mists of time. Not so to many of us. In fact, to coin a phrase, it seems only yesterday. That's how we used to get our Bing - a single record at a time, cost 2/6d or, of course, 12½p. It can well be argued that in that 30 years record collectors have never had it so good. Record production must have been among the industries that benefitted enormously from technical development.

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By and large, most items, including the cost of living, have been inflated to at least thirty times their 1930's value. A wage of £100 a week now would equate to about £3.50 in the 30's. By that reckoning, a LP with twelve titles equalling six 78rpm singles (ie two songs, one per side) should equal 12½p multiplied by thirty, that is - £3.75; Hmmm...perhaps things haven't changed so much after all.

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But, price apart, the album brought another tremendous benefit - and that is its virtually unbreakable condition. Buying a treasured 78 in the 'good old days' was one thing - getting it home safely was another thing altogether. Even if you weren't around when shellac 78s were the ONLY thing, you've seen them of course. It often seemed there was nothing as delicate and brittle as a 78rpm gramophone record. The ease with which they were cracked or actually broken was alarming.

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And at that time, of course, there were no tape-recorders; therefore no question of taping them to save playing the record every time. No matter how much you wanted to play it again and again you refrained from

overdoing it - in case you wore the record out too quickly! Yet those delicate 78s were (and are) surprisingly durable provided you could steer clear of cracks and accidental breakage.

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They survived playing countless times with a steel needle, would you believe! Mind, the 'hiss' that was built into them on account of the cutting machines then in use did gradually get more intrusive. And the recording quality was extraordinarily good for those days. This is proved by the excellent quality of vintage LPs we have got over the years. In fact, they often sound better because we play them on much better equipment although there are diehards who insist the old 78s sound better than new recordings, especially when played on old equipment!

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And assuredly, the innovation of the LP has enabled collections of very sizeable proportions to be built up in a comparatively short space of time. Definitely a boon....but before we leave the subject of the frailty and the seeming paradoxof the durability of old 78s, we recall a harrowing incident. A then young collector visited an older one and received, as a parting gift among other things a prized and very rare 78rpm record - WISTFUL AND BLUE if I remember rightly. Calling "Goodnight - and thanks a million" our young friend place this 78 on the front seat of the car beside him, to keep an eye on it.

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Half a mile down the road he was flagged down and asked for a lift to the station - if he was going that way? Sure, said young collector, jump in. The stranger did just that - and WISTFUL AND BLUE lay in a hundred pieces. The memory is still painful.

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But we started out on old 78s originally because we give them a lot of thought - naturally. By 1937 Bing was a very firmly established world-star, unique, loved, admired...everyone had come to accept that. We'd had a torrent of memorable records - just look at the recordings up until 1937 - and thought we were well aware of the tremendous facets of Mr. Crosby. Each new record was hailed, listened to intently to hear the new 'trisks' the ad libs., the phrasing that Bing was so noted for.

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And while, perhaps, it was the younger, 'dance-band fraternity' who first began raving about this new chap, Bing (it had been mostly Rudy Vallee until then) when he recorded songs like SWANEE RIVER, HOME ON THE RANGE, I LOVE YOU TRULY, as well as the cascade of lovely songs from his earlier films, the middle-road, middle and old-aged became fans. Such was the unique appeal of Bing Crosby - he didn't appeal just to youngsters, 'teen-agers' (the only ones seemingly considered today!), but to virtually everybody. Even the crooner-sneerers (there were some!) among the more classical singers conceded this chap Crosby "had something".

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As the world learned quickly, he certainly had! All this came back to us largely as a result of listening again to one of Bing's much-neglected 78s - that of THE ONE ROSE. Remember in the prev-

ious issue of BING we quoted the remark allegedly made by John Scott Trotter: "Only play it once - the second time he starts improvising!" THE ONE ROSE presents a perfect example. There had of course been many examples earlier - Bing's incredible performance of ITS EASY TO REMEMBER when he totally changed the melody "second-time-around" on the recording. The same thing happens beautifully in THE ONE ROSE. The first chorus is reasonably straight but after an orchestral interlude Bing sings again - and the melody is re-interpreted in incredible, highly melodic and appealing style.

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One wonders whether this kind of melody-change was spontaneous. Personally, I doubt it. But that in no way affected the truly artistic way in which Bing reconstrues the melody. If you haven't listened to this record lately, or are unaware of what I'm getting at, I earnestly advise you to listen to it. It stamped Bing as a true, natural, musician. A natural musician, i.e. immediately capable of understanding a song's meaning and the right interpretation to give it - not just belt away without a thought to the lyric.

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Its often been said that despite his unique musical career and background, Bing couldn't read music. Remember he sat in the Whiteman orchestra with rubber strings to a violin, or with a mouthpiece-less tuba and so on? Indicative, of course, that he was not an instrumentalist and capable, therefore, of reading music. The most he achieved was recognising from the music "whether the notes went up - or down!"

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I know, and I'm sure you do too, people who can play piano or even some other instrument exquisitely with, as the old saying goes, not having had a lesson in their lives! It is a musical attribute, a gift that is rare but stamping those who have it as true "natural musicians". That's how Bing used his voice, as a true, natural, even brilliant musician.

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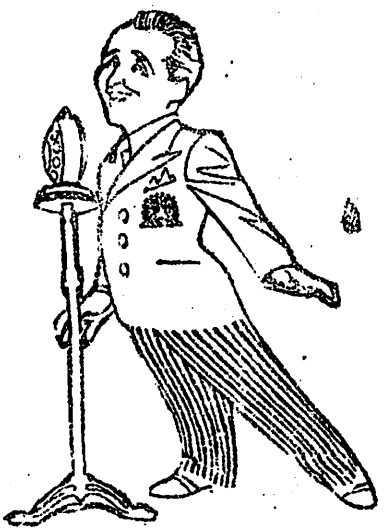

Its a bit unfair possibly to write about, even laud songs, without naming the composers/writers - yet look what happened to us when we speculated on the authors of BROTHER CAN YOU SPARE A DIME! We'll take a chance however. THE ONE ROSE is accredited to LYON/McINTIRE and surely the latter was either Lani or Dick of that ilk who accompanied Bing on some of his Hawaiian recordings? It is a fine melody. Who LYONS is - does anyone know? The name doesn't appear to crop us again. The accompaniment, by the way, is by Victor Young & his Orchestra though, as with so many records, it takes a

very astute, not to say knowledgeable Crosbyite, to distinguish a Young accompaniment from a John Scott Trotter. With 158 accompaniments to Bing Victor is just under half the number JST did and in view of the mild criticms from some quarters concerning John Scott, it may be an interesting point for discussion. For example, supposing JST hadn't come on the scene - how would Bing have fared with, say, Victor Young?

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Come to think about it, that's another interesting facet: we know the story of how John Scott Trotter was virtually summoned by Bing to be his MD (on account of his arrangements for the PENNIES FROM HEAVEN film) but while, clearly, Victor Young was a large and important feature in the Crosby recording story, he has - as far as we know - received little attention on this account. Indeed, I've never really understood his position.

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As we've already observed, he made about half the number that JST did which makes him a considerable contributor. More than that, he didn't succeed anyone as JST did (Jimmy Dorsey) and was never ousted. Indeed, Victor Young's orchestra was liable to turn up on record all through the Scott Trotter reign! In another way, while JST was exclusive to Bing, Bing wasn't exclusive to JST.

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Victor Young was closely associated with the film industry - one sees his name frequently on credits when films are shewn on TV; was he also a resident musical director for Decca? One wonders how the choice was made - JST or VY - for various recording sessions. True Bing recorded with umpteen others, bandleaders, pianists, organists, trios, and so on but the two giants were, obviously, JST and Victor Young. I feel someone might come up with a story on Victor. It is overdue.

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Piqued by my 'new' thoughts on Victor Young, and after some elementary research, I made the astonishing discovery that Victor actually had a longer recording association with Bing than what we usually refer to as the JST-marathon! Starting with WERE YOU SINCERE? in 1931 (4/5) Victor's last recordings with Bing were four titles, I WHISTLE A HAPPY TUNE, HELLO YOUNG LOVERS, GETTING TO KNOW YOU and SOMETHING WONDERFUL - on 9th April, 1951. So, Victor was around a month shorter than 20 years recording with Bing.

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John Scott Trotter's first wax four titles, ITS THE NATURAL THING TO DO, ALL YOU WANT TO DO IS DANCE, THE MOON GOT IN MY EYES, and SMARTY (from the film DOUBLE OR NOTHING) on 12/7/37; his last were LIZA and IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMERTIME on 21/5/54 though another of his accompaniments, NOBODY, was taken from a Philco Radio Show of 1947 and issued as a commercial recording in December 1954. So really JST's time was around 17 years.

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Granted, as we have said, JST's contribution was double that of Victor Young in numbers of recordings, the other big difference was the former's long radio stint with Bing, taking in of course, years of the Kraft Music Hall. Even so, Victor has been curiously neglected, it seems.

THE BING CROSBY STORY

Has appeared many times; this one refers to the lovely story told and sung by TEDDY JOHNSON and PEARL CARR, with music by HARRY GOLD AND HIS PIECES OF EIGHT

Its good to know that this quite delightful show is still to be seen. Bill Hooper and his wife (Sutton,Surrey) recently saw it at The Playhouse,Epsom and pronounced it as "Magic!" We have fully reported the show in BING on a previous occasion. Teddy Johnson, a fine artist in his own right with his wife, Pearl Carr, tell an authentic story wit literally dozens of Crosby songs. And assuredly, Teddy knows his Bing.

As a result of Bill Hooper's efforts we have learned the itinerary of the show. Many members have already seen it and no doubt this listing will enable many others so to do.

From mid-July until early September the show will be 'resident' at the ARCADIA, SKEGNESS, thence:

4/5th September:	Pavilion, Weymouth.
9th September	Congress, Eastbourne.
16th "	Grand, Blackpool
28/29th "	Playhouse, Weston-super-Mare.
30th September	Wimbledon Theatre.
3/4th October	Haslett Theatre, Maidstone.
21st October	Basingstoke, Haymarket Theatre.

If you are reasonably-placed to any of these venues it is very well worth seeing. Teddy Johnson and his colleagues are doing a tremendous, positive, job in perpetuating Bing's memory. We learn from the promotors, JRJ Productions Ltd., that they are particularly anxious that the show does well at Skegness and Wimbledon. It deserves support.

The show now, incidentally, is billed as FOREVER BING !

*** BING SINGS STEPHEN FOSTER ***

NELL AND I

We parted in the springtime of life, Nell and I.
With all our gushing joys in their bloom;
But now we've met the world's busy strike, Nell and I.
And suffered from its dark chilling gloom.

Yet my heart will sigh, for those days gone by
That flow in my mem'ry's sweet refrain.
We parted in the springtime of life, Nell and I,
And I'll never see her bright smiles again.

SWEETLY SHE SLEEPS,
MY ALICE FAIR

Sweetly she sleeps, my Alice fair, Her cheek on the pillow pressed,
Sweetly she sleeps, while her Saxon hair, like sunlight streams o'er her breast.

(Cont.)

Hush! let her sleep! I pray sweet breeze, breathe low on the maple bough!
Hush! bright bird, on her window-trees! For sweetly she sleepeth now.

Sweetly she sleeps, my Alice fair, her cheek on the pillow pressed,
Sweetly she sleeps, while her saxon hair, like sunlight, streams o'er her breast.

BEAUTIFUL DREAMER

Beautiful dreamer, wake unto me, starlight and dewdrops are waiting for thee;
Sounds of the rude world heard in the day, Lull'd by the moonlight have all passed away.

Beautiful dreamer, queen of my song, List while I woo thee with soft melody,
Gone are the cares of life's busy throng, Beautiful dreamer, awake unto me.

I DREAM OF JEANIE WITH THE LIGHT BROWN HAIR

I dream of Jeanie with the light brown hair,
Borne like a vapour on the summer air!
I see her tripping where the bright streams play,
Happy as the daisies that dance on her way.

Many were the wild notes her merry voice would pour,
Many were the blithe birds that warbled them o'er.
Oh! I dream of Jeanie with the light brown hair.
Floating like a vapour, on the soft summer air.

SWANEE RIVER (OLD FOLKS AT HOME)

Way down upon the de Swanee ribber, far, far, away
Dere's wha my heart is turning ebber, Dere's wha de old folks stay.

All up and down de whole creation, sadly I roam,
Still longing for the old plantation, and for the old folks at home.

All de world am sad and dreary, Eb'rywhere I roam,
Oh! darkies, how my heart grows weary, far from de old folks at home.

MY OLD KENTUCKY HOME

The sun shines bright in the old Kentucky home,
'Tis summer, the darkies are gay.
The corn top's ripe and the meadow's in the bloom,
While the birds make music all the day.

Weep no more my lady, Oh! weep no more today!
We will sing one song for the old Kentucky home,
For the old Kentucky home, far away.

The young folks roll on the little cabin floor,
All merry, all happy, and bright,
By'n by Hard Times comes a-knockin' at the door,
Then my old Kentucky home, goodnight!

Weep no more my lady, Oh! weep no more today!
We will sing one song for the old Kentucky home,
For the old Kentucky home, far away.

STEPHEN FOSTER died in poverty and obscurity at the age of 38 - a musical figure who flashed brilliantly across the horizon only to fade...until a revival of interest in his work and a fuller realisation of his contribution won him the esteem in which he is held today.

NAPLES NEWS

Tony Weitzel Recalls an 'Ordinary Man'

By TONY WEITZEL
Staff Writer

Hearing about Bing Crosby was the shock of suddenly losing pieces of your own life. Now many Americans ever saw him in the flesh. But he was part of their life fabric.

He shunned crowds, except the ones who attend golf matches and stage benefits. He hated sloppy emotionalism.

HE WAS an old-fashioned Catholic kid who tried to live by the book. He was so real that he played a priest in "Going My Way" and made you kneel in poignant reverence. He could play a lover and turn your girl on like nobody else.

He said, "People say I'm humble. Actually I'm just embarrassed because I've never done anything really great!"

Maybe he was just one of the few real, flesh-and-blood-and-guts human beings in a tinsel world of phoneys.

FRED ASTAIRE marveled once when he was doing his first picture with Bing. He'd heard Bing didn't like to rehearse. So he was amazed when Bing showed up bright and early the first day in practice clothes to rehearse the first song and dance number.

Astaire remembered the World War II days when he jeeped around behind our lines in France, entertaining GIs at St. Lo and Villone and in the ruins of Lemans.

Bing never pulled his punches. He was a great friend of Frank Sinatra but he mused once, "Sinatra is quite a fellow, a paradoxical cuss. He goes about doing wonderful things for people who need help. He can be generous, kind and selfless. Then he'll turn around and do something so inexplicably thoughtless you wonder if it's the same fellow!"

For years, even in the "Road" pictures, he maintained a phoney feud with Bob Hope, a guy he loved. It was show business. Benny and Fred Allen had a feud. Hope and Crosby had a feud.

THE CRITICS of three generations wondered, when they were long on space, how Bing got his crooning style. Oldtimers confide that Benny Fields sang like that long ago when he was touring with Blossom Seeley.

It was a muted, relaxed version of the way sons of Jewish cantors like Jolson and Harry Richman sang.

A very sharp press agent for the Balaban & Katz chain in Chicago listened to Bing in "Going My Way" and chuckled, "Listen, a GENTILE CANTOR!"

BING INSISTED he was just an ordinary man and maybe that's why he was able to weave his genial spirit into the very fabric of American life for half a tortured 20th century.

Bing died as he live, on tour. He played London and the Limey crowds couldn't get enough of him. The end came when he was playing around a golf course outside Madrid with a Spanish pro named Gandarias.

That's the name of a family of grandees that for centuries has owned a vast finca (ranch) between Madrid and Toledo that was originally a grant to Christopher Columbus.

Bing now is gone. But he'll be home with us for Christmas, a singing shadow on the TV screens of the world.

— TRADING POST —

The usual market-place wherein members may advertise free their wants & disposals of Crosbyana - records, book, tapes, pictures &c. No charge tho' £1 nominal for non-Crosby insertions. Please keep to a mx. of six lines; where long lists are involved, invite a SAE. All entries are in good faith but the Editor cannot accept any responsibility for transactions. Members must satisfy themselves they are making a satisfactory deal.

RON BOSLEY, 105 Polefield Rd., Prestwich, Manchester, M25: I can supply hundreds of black/white photos of Bing. Stills from films, candid pictures of Bing at work and play from 30's to 70's. Any size up to 10 x 8" - SAE for lists. I WANT: film stills of Bing/Martin/Teagarden in the WAITER AND THE FOOL & THE UPSTAIRS MAID and Bing/Majorie Reynolds in the MARY HOLIDAY number. Would like to buy or borrow. Will pay well in cash or, if preferred, in stills.

BING ties, with the well-known motif (scattered throughout this issue!) in maroon or dark blue are available from THE BADGE CENTRE, 13 Ropergate, Pontefract, West Yorks. Price £3 post paid.

ICC car-stickers in blue/gold approx 3" dia. are available from BARRY THECKSTON, 13 Cunliffe Aven., Ramsbottom, Lancs - two for £1 - pop in post with SAE.

Both ARNOLD BAKER, 48 Groomsport Rd., Bangor, Co. Down, N. Ireland and JOHN UNWIN, 47 West Way, Broadstone, Dorset have attractive and comprehensive lists of cassettes (Bing of course) for sale: send SAE for details.

BOB JONES, 39 Gladstone St. Hebburn, Tyne & Wear NE31 2XD has cassettes of VARIOUS artists for sale - Lanza, Dick Todd, Jolson etc. etc. SAE for details.

Preparing for his Waldorf event, JOHN MARSHALL, 39 Kings Rd., Teddington, Midd'x. had, among his contacts, the famous pianist SKITCH HENDERSON, so long a fixture on Bing's radio shows. Subsequently, John was delighted to receive from Skitch 3 LPs which contained a radio programme entitled SALUTE TO BING, broadcast last Thanksgiving Day across the States. Minus commercial breaks/announcements this 3-hour programme amounts to 144 minutes (2hrs.24 mins) of Crosby records, interviews with artists, composers &c.stylishly presented by Skitch Henderson. A wonderful gift, which John is making available on two cassettes, nicely presented, at £5 post paid. The whole thing is beautifully recorded tho' the records are not of the rarer type. Nevertheless, it is a great piece of Crosbyana.

BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD remains available at £3.50 post paid from JOHN JOYCE, Bookbinders, Saltmeadows Rd., Gateshead, Tyne & Wear - the hardback volume listing all Bing's recordings from the first to the last, in date, and then chronological, order. A boon for everyone for reference, browsing - and Crosby education! Overseas members MUST remit in sterling: European £4.00; US/Canadian £4.00 surface mail, £6. airmail. And remittances made out to "JOHN JOYCE, ICC ACCOUNT".

DON LOVE, 34 Salisbury Rd., Enfield, Midd'x EN3 6HQ is anxious to acquire Bing's THE STORY OF SORRENTO on BR 04134 - willing to pay good price, especially for good condition.

TWO CORRECTIONS! In the lyric of NELL & I, first stanza, the words should be 'busy strife' not 'busy strike' (line 3) Way back in Les Gaylor's story that snappy striped-blazer routine was, in fact, filmed to the accompaniment of a 78rpm record - on a battered portable gramophone and not the amplifier we mentioned - slight misinterpretation on our part. The high-quality soundtrack was, of course, grafted on later.

JOHN MANSTON, Flat 3, 437a Poole Rd., Parkstone, Poole, Dorset, BH12 1DQ wants THE COMPLEAT 15-album set, BING'S HOLLYWOOD 1-15.

(John said in his letter that ITV have six Bing films lined up for showing - and have we any idea what are the titles? No, news to us.)

JOHN JOYCE, 5 Shelley Rd., Short Heath, Willenhall, West Midlands (Phone Bloxwich 75265): I urgently want video cassette OR 8/16mm film of WAIKIKI WEDDING: HERE IS MY HEART: COLLEGE HUMOR: BIG BROADCAST 1936: EMPEROR WALTZ: SING YOU SINNERS: early version of ANYTHING GOES. Will buy OR trade for e.g. American VHS cassettes of TOO MUCH HARMONY: HOLLYWOOD ON PARADE: BOND RALLY: CROSBY,COLUMBO, VALLEE (1930's cartoon)

BARRY SANDEROOCK,10 Captain Cook Close, Chalfont St. Giles, Bucks (Phone 02407 2976) for sale by auction (closing July 15): BOOK - The Story of Bing Crosby by Ted Crosby(exc. cond) RECORDS: BING 15, Bing Crosby's All-time Hit Parade LWS 349, Old Masters Vol 1(Ace of Hearts AHL)

RICHARD PEARSON, PO Box 1481, Arlington, VA. 22210, USA: I need BING 7 and 8: I will trade ANY 2 of BING 4,5,6,10,11,12, 14,15. Assuming I manage to trade 2 of these for my 2 wants, 6LPs will be remaining. I am willing to accept bids of at least 10 dollars (US/ Australian,)or £6.50 British - so that anyone interested may bid will hold until end of the year. Postage is extra. (Richard gave the US cat. nos for these albums and we've transposed the British - Editor)

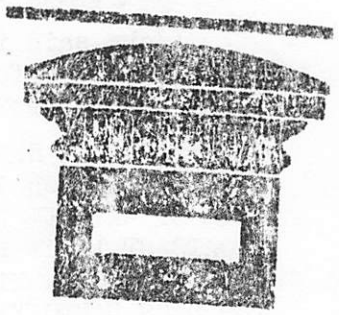
THE MINI-DISCOG. OF BING remains available at £1.50 post paid from the Editor (Tho' superseded by BING-JUST FOR THE RECORD this is useful for marking and notating to preserve the hardback unmarked!) Also from the Editor: just a few copies of PHILCO RADIO TIMES by LIONEL PAIRPOINT (full details with prolific notes of Bing's radio shows for that company) £2.50 post paid. AND THE ALTERNATE BING CROSBY by COLIN PUGH, giving varying takes of Bing's recordings at the same price;

MRS. RENEE CHESTER, 48 Milton Road, Hanwell, London, W7 has a vast collection of Crosby films, shows &c. on video. SAE for enquiries, lists &c. (We've heard that Renee, on a visit to the States for the Tacoma May tribute has had an unfortunate mishap involving an injury to her foot. We hope she is home and well by the time this appears).

The article two pages back entitled TONY WERTZEL RECALLS AN 'ORDINARY MAN' may need a word of explanation. The story came from an American paper and not, as you may think from NAPLES NEWS, from Italy - in the latter case it would, of course, have been written in Italian! We don't know who Tony is but acknowledge our thanks. Unlike many such stories - written shortly after Bing died, it seems - it does offer some new thoughts. The comments said to have been made by Bing about Sinatra are particularly interesting. The views on from whence Bing got his singing style are new, too. We firmly believe that while Bing may have been inspired or influenced by certain artists, his style was completely original, completely unique. It isn't now (except where he was concerned) because so many have aped, or adopted, his style. But, a Gentile Cantor!

PETER EDEN, 4 Cliff Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex SSO 7AJ (Phone 0702-48366) offers the rarer type of Crosby records, including imports. SAE for lists.

Just a fraction of the mail we get - always appreciated and read with interest. Quite a number sent us the little paragraph that appeared in THE SUNDAY EXPRESS: "Bing's Atom Secret: Multi-millionaire TV producer Aaron Spelling, the man behind DYNASTY, made an interesting discovery recently after buying the late Bing Crosby's home. Although he paid 10 million dollars for the house he decided to knock it down and build one to his own design. When demolition men moved in they found a series of underground tunnels linking up to a nuclear fallout shelter." ? Hmmm...sounds rather fanciful to us...which home did this mean, not the Hillsborough mansion, surely. And would anyone buy a house at that figure just for the land? As for the tunnels and shelter - perhaps there were those Bing wished to escape from occasionally !



BING Letters

KEN SMITH, 43 St. Johns Rd., Chadwell St. Mary, Essex, RM16 4JU: I'm a 20-year-old and wonder if you could answer a couple of questions for me. I saw DOCTOR RHYTHM on BBC-2 but didn't, of course, see it on its original release in 1938 -did the BBC cut the Louis Armstrong segment out of the showing; and what happened to the song DR. RHYTHM?

Editor: Trust an earnest new lad of that age to ask awkward questions! I didn't see the Dec. last showing - did they cut out Satchmo. As for the song, Bing never did put it on record. We wonder why!

RON DANIELS, 1 Battye Aven. Victor Harbor, South Australia 5211: Page 38 of last issue and piece about Decca omitting WHITE CHRISTMAS from their 78rpm album set of HOLIDAY INN. Have you noticed Decca even left it off their 10" LP of HOLIDAY INN. You'll look for it in vain on your Brunswick LA8592. That's how much Decca thought of the song WHITE CHRISTMAS. As you say, hard to believe!

May I end my letter (Ron wrote about many other subjects - Ed.) with a quote from Carroll Carroll's book, MY LIFE WITH....Carroll, of course, wrote the ad libs for Bing to say on the KMH radio shows. Quote: "Murdo McKenzie, who was engineer on the KMH show, had a complete collection of recordings of the show up to the time he went into the Army - about '43. He locked all these in a closet at NBC - with a sign PERSONAL PROPERTY OF MURDO McKENZIE. When he got back the closet had a new door - and was full of mops, and brooms. Murdo was told: "We needed the space." Says Carroll: "An awful lot of radio that was an important part of its time went down the drain like that."

Editor: Heartbreaking.....

DON WOOD, 18 Parley Close, West Parley, Wimborne, D'set: The controversy - if its that - over the JST backings seems to have promoted a spate of hair-pulling and bad language in the pages of BING. Tut!Tut! Mr. Gaylor! May I say that I never tried to crucify JST. Many of his backings give me great pleasure. Its just that in my humble opinion the arrangement for THE MOON GOT IN MY EYES is the greatest thing for insomnia sufferers since Ovaltine. As for Bill Chatfield, no doubt he loves everything Bing ever recorded. Does he listen with glazed eyes to BE-BOP spoken here, or does his world stop at the sound of PECKIN'? Come now, Bill, we are nonetheless loyal for a little healthy criticism and to be selective in one's appreciation of Mr. Crosby is no bad thing, I guess. For example, the sheer nonsensical sentimentality of POOR OLD ROVER has me reaching for the STOP button whereas just listening to KENTUCKY BABE moves me to tears. Before the irate dog-owners fall about my ears, may I say that my golden retriever owns me - I don't own him!

> Editor: I thought 'crucify' was a bit strong from ol' Les Gaylor. And I've always believed Bing was taking the mickey with BE-BOP and PECKIN' - as I'm sure he was in HEY JUDE! However, it really is remarkable how often successive letters complement one another. See this one....

RON PHILPOTT, 201 Walford House, Enfield: I often feel like writing regarding statements and opinions on Bing and his songs and singing. Then I change my mind, not being able to put into words or write with better knowledge of Bing than so many others. But, here toes.

I think with all fans it is easy to go overboard on what you like and dislike. To me, Bing was a genius when it came to his rendering of a song. How did he do it? There's no answer, I suppose - but to pick out one or two songs from such a long career as bad seems a little absurd to me. So many songs - LITTLE DUTCH MILL, TAKES TWO TO MAKE A BARGAIN, SAILOR BEWARE - many, many others that were 'fun' songs. Then on to love songs like SWEETHEARTS, AH! SWEET MYSTERY OF LIFE (which incidentally, I purchased in the 30's and its still very playable). SECOND TIME AROUND, INCURABLY ROMANTIC, all sung exactly how they should be sung. That's my answer, I suppose, to those who say this or that could have been better sung. Listen to Matt Munro sing AROUND TH' WORLD, a record I have. And, its quite a good record, but its just a song. Bing's rendition has all the feeling the words convey. Another is GIGI. Where does it end? It needs a novel! Which I'm not writing....but regarding quotes on Bing, I've read quite a few autobiographies by show business personalities. I've yet to read one that does not mention Bing with affection, respect, and praise.

This one is from Ray Milland's early days, and I quote:

> "Sunday night at the Grove happened once a month and the place would be lousy with celebrities all fighting for a chance to get up and do a little entertaining. (He goes on explaining the evening, that the orchestra was Gus Arnheim's whose vocal group was the Rhythm Boys) Grace Moore sang "Mimi", W.C.Fields juggled with three cigar boxes. The the third and most moving happening of the night was the final one. I thought it was an odd choice until I remembered it was Sunday. One of the Rhythm Boys, the blond and lackadaisical

one named Bing Crosby, stepped to the microphone and in a surprisingly fine baritone (Note: Alastair Cook!) started Gounod's AVE MARIA. Immediately there was a complete hush; not even a plate was moved. It is not a long piece and is usually reprised. When he came to the reprise I heard a soprano softly drift in from a table near the stage; towards the end, both voices came in full, and when they finished the hush remained. I looked at Asher (Milland's friend and MGM publicity man) but he was transported. Then the roar started; chairs were pushed back and people stood and the applause was deafening. It was so emotional. The soprano was Lily Pons."

Perhaps you've heard this extract before but can you imagine that astonishing tribute - from all the stars of Hollywood when Bing was virtually unknown except as a Rhythm Boy at the Grove:

I've rambled on a bit; its hard to put into words what Bing really means to us, or oneself. I know he has given my wife and I so many enjoyable moments, for so long. Our first record was WITH EVERY BREATH I TAKE and JUNE IN JANUARY. We bought it new when it first came out - and still have it. As for the DESERT ISLAND DISCS. I would just have to put them all together, shake them up - and take pot luck. They would be excellent.

Editor: That puts things back into perspective; certainly Ron shouldn't be so reticent about his writing ability. We hope he won't leave it so long next time! Whether or not we'd heard the Ray Milland anecdote doesn't really matter: it was good to read it again. Splendid effort, Ron.

PHIL WOOD, 59 MacDonald Rd., Edinburgh: Early in the 30's when I was a lad of 12 or 13 I was, of course, then as now, a Bing fanatic. THE BIG BROADCAST was playing in some of the local flea-pits and I had probably seen it six or seven times already yet I spent a fruitless half-hour trying to coax my mother to let me see it 'just one more time'. She was adamant, however. I'd seen it enough - and just to make sure I did not go she hid my shoes and stockings. She hadn't realised my dedication and that a little thing like that could not stop a dedicated fan. So, off I went through pouring rain thro' the busy thoroughfare in the city centre to the side-street where the film was being shewn. In my bare - and wet - feet I banged down my fourpence (old money naturally) and in I went. Stuart Erwin was doing his 'impersonation' of Bing who had failed to turn up for his broadcast when I was blinded by the torch of the usherette shinging directly on my face. "Can I see your ticket, son?" she asked. Horror of horrors, I was in the FIVEPENNIES (seats were 4d, 5d, and 6d then). The usherette was a kindly soul and goodness knows why - or what she thought - but she shone the torch down on my feet. Instead of demanding the extra penny (which I hadn't got) or banishing me from my favourable seat, she patted me on the head and said: "all right sonny - just sit where you are..."

It wasn't so kind, however, when I got home. I have no desire to relate THAT.

Editor: Going back isn't Phil? Hard times - but good moments with them. Barefoot to the Fleapit!

CHAS. D. BAILLIE, 118 W. Las Flores Ave. Arcadia, CA 91006,USA:

To put my 2-cents' worth in regarding John Scott Trotter, I agree that his arrangements for Bing were fine at the time they were recorded. However, it now appears that the modern disc jockeys - at least, in the L.A. area - feel they "are unimaginative and dull". There are three local AM stations playing music of the 30's up to the 60's so I do have a chance to hear Bing with some regularity; however, Sinatra and Nat King Cole get a much bigger play. And when playing the records of these two, the DJ's constantly comment on the outstanding arrangements of Nelson Riddle, Gordon Jenkins, Billy May, Alex Stordahl and others from Capitaol records back these artists. While Bing "purists" may prefer an unobtrusive background, with modern sound systems the orchestra and arrangement is also extremely important to the record's popularity. I personally feel that Nelson Riddle's lush arrangements have extended Sinatra's career, and beautiful arrangements have given new popularity to the late Nat King Cole's recordings. One man's opinion - but I do wish Bing had signed with Capitol records when he left Decca!!

Editor: Chas. makes a very reasoned point or two with which its difficult to disagree. The important proviso he makes is "were fine at the time they were recorded". And that brings up a facet that, so far, has been considered little if at all.

In the mid-50's when, indeed, Sinatra and Cole were being projected almost as 'cult' figures, Bing had been a world-star for a quarter-of-a-century! Add to that, Bing's idiom, or background, had been the band, e.g. Whiteman, Arnheim, Grier and scores of others all thro' the years. And in the 50's things began to change radically. Bing seemed to think he'd had enough when his Decca contract finally ended; he 'went off' films saying he was too old to be romantic &c (he didn't know HIGH SOCIETY was coming up!). Moreover, he showed a distinct inclination to globe-trotting! Europe, Africa and Other places he hadn't visited.

And also happening in the 50's was the catastrophic change in popular music! To wit, the big-band scene (which we've named as Bing's medium) finally faded away except for a few illustrious "survivors". Elvis Presley, Rock 'n' roll, skiffle, folk, etc. etc., the Beatles (ultimately) changed the entire face of popular music. The "Charts" became more important than the Commandments.... the age of lunacy set in. EXCEPT, good popular music was still required - for films, for television spectaculars and so on. Thus Riddle, Mancini, May, Jenkins and many more. They were - and are - large orchestras, a cross-between dance bands and light classical outfits. And Sinatra et al reaped the benefit of this otherwise painful revolution, for these directors really set about 'dressing-up' accompaniments to the singers around. And, it must be admitted, that Bing seemed content to let it be! Yet, he did record with Riddle, Billy May (not very happily), Bill Justis and a few others - when he felt like it.

Finally, few DJ's today know the Crosby story - except second-hand and not really knowing what its all about. Bing had been around so long, his voice was so familiar, he was truly the "old-time family favourite". The industry (musical, that is) including DJ's and record producers must have been in despair at breaking the mould - and finding something, someone, new. Understandable, to an extent! So much that Bing did is now, alas, overlooked. Its too OLD, man! Great, wonderful, BUT OLD!

Nevertheless, we remain convinced one day, somewhere, a record will be played that catches the imagination - and it will all start again!

TELLING POINTS FROM MORE LETTERS: LIONEL FAIRPOINT (Mill Hill):.."Roger D. Kinkle in his Complete Encyclopaedia of Popular Music and Jazz 1' - 1950 best describes how JST's arrangements matched Bing's style during the period 1937: 'Crosby's style, then evolving from heavily romantic to light and airy, with songs and arrangements to MATCH. Trotter's arrangements captured the mood well and the band provided excellent backing on radio and records....ask Joe Public if they ever heard Bing sing MOONLIGHT BECOMES YOU, SWINGING ON A STAR, or even WHITE CHRISTMAS and 99% will say YES; but ask them who the band was and the same proportion won't know. That's the kind of arranger a vocalist needs!'.... I am miffed by the flabby reasoning behind the refusal to programme DIXIE especially as there seem to be clear possibilities of THE JOLSON STORY, JOLSON SINGS AGAIN, MAMMY, and SWANEE RIVER - a tributeto the most blatant purveyor of the 'coon' image ever!....

BILL ANNING (Nottingham): 'In 1942 whilst in the Forces in Gibraltar I was in hospital for 14 weeks, isolated in a room of my own. The orderly one day kindly brought in his portable gramophone for me, with a pile of records - and every one a Bing record! You can imagine how much better I felt. One record has always stood out in my mind - POOR OLD ROVER - and I often hum it during the day now.....'

DID BING PART FROM "CHESTERFIELD" OVER AN UPSET CONCERNING HIS MOTHER? DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE CHESTERFIELD PROGRAMMES: BACKGROUND INFORMATION? THE EDITOR WOULD BE PLEASED TO HEAR - NOTHING TOO INSIGNIFICANT!

VIC BYNE (Slough)...."..have you seen the British Decca album, STARS OF THE 30'S which has four Bing tracks, viz. I GUESS IT HAD TO BE THAT WAY/THE DAY YOU CAME ALONG/IF YOU SHOULD EVER NEED ME/SHINE. Surely these had been previously Columbia (RCA) territory? Is Decca moving across the 50-year copyright line? Rest of the record includes Jolson, Connie Boswell, Eddie Cantor, Ruth Etting, Kate Smith &c.

Editor: Shouldn't think so. re. 50-year rule; these records are in that curious category which came out here on both Brunswick and Columbia.... Incidentally, though not particularly green-fingered I've had the most delightful show of BING CROSBY TULIPS, thanks to Vic who sent the bulbs....grew over 2ft with large, dark red, blooms... just fading away, alas!

JUST IN THE NICK OF TIME WE HEAR FROM AMERICA THAT THE SIXTH ANNUAL TRIBUTE BY THE BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY IN MAY WAS A BIG SUCCESS. THE OCCASION WAS OPPORTUNE TO LAUNCH THE NEW BOOK "BING - A VOICE FOR ALL SEASONS" and the Society were delighted to welcome as a honoured guest the author of the book, SHELDON O'CONNELL from Canada. Seems he charmed everyone and indeed, Sheldon performed the duties of MC for the two evenings involved. RENEE and DENNIS CHESTER were the sole British representatives on this occasion and received a warm welcome and even warmer appreciation. An auction raised, it is reported, 725 dollars which will either"go to the birthplace-purchase fund OR a suitable place for visitors to see until the birthplace can be secured." Here will be shewn films, video, and records/tapes played for visitors.

AND FINALLY, FOR THIS ISSUE: 14-year-old MISS MELANIE PRENDIVILLE, 14, Fords Park Rd., Canning Town, London, E6 1NL: I have just joined the Crosby Circle and would like to thank all the very kind people who have helped me and written great letters. Mr. Leslie Gaylor has been especially kind. He has given me much information and sent me a great Bing LP and cassette as well as photos. I would like Bing fans to write and give me encouragement with my liking of Bing. I hope as many as possible will write to me. So far, everyone has been most kind.....

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